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# THE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN

EDITED BY

E. T. COOK

AND

ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1907

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VOLUME XXVII

# FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTERS 1–36

334136

# FORS CLAVIGERA

## LETTERS TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS OF GREAT BRITAIN

VOLUME I

CONTAINING

LETTERS 1–36

1871, 1872, 1873

BY

JOHN RUSKIN

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1907

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# INTRODUCTION TO VOL. XXVII[1]

THIS volume and the two which follow it contain the book, published in monthly parts, which Ruskin called *Fors Clavigera: Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain*. The three next succeeding volumes of this edition contain writings which grew out of *Fors Clavigera*. Volume XXX. gives various Reports, Papers, and Catalogues referring to the "Guild of St. George," the association which was announced and explained in *Fors*. Volumes XXXI. and XXXII. contain *Bibliotheca Pastorum* and allied publications which Ruskin prepared in connexion with "St. George's Schools." The six volumes (XXVII.–XXXII.) are thus closely connected in purpose.

Of the Letters forming *Fors Clavigera*, eighty-seven were published at regular monthly intervals from January 1871 to the time of Ruskin's serious illness in February and March 1878. The remaining Letters (88–96) were published at irregular intervals from 1880 to 1884. With the exception of the last eight Letters, *Fors Clavigera* thus takes us no further in the story of Ruskin's life and work than the point already reached—namely, his breakdown in the spring of 1878 (Vol. XXV. pp. xxv.–xxviii.). The chronological arrangement of the volumes in this edition brings out very clearly the accumulation of work piled upon work under which Ruskin's health gave way. In Volumes XX., XXII., and XXIII. we have read the lectures which he delivered, or prepared, for the Professorship at Oxford. Volume XXI. has shown the work he did in connexion with his classes and Drawing School there. In Volumes XXIII. (in part) and XXIV. are contained the Guide-books to Florence and Venice, the preparation of which he conceived to be included among his duties as a Professor of the Fine Arts.[2] The teaching of art was, however, to Ruskin the teaching of everything,[3] and in Volumes XXV. and XXVI. we have the studies in Birds, Flowers, Rocks and Stones by which he supplemented and illustrated his lessons in the laws of natural beauty. We now pass to six

[1] The Introduction to the present volume applies to *Fors Clavigera* generally; the Introductions to Vol. XXVIII. and Vol. XXIX. notice a few matters which specially refer to those volumes respectively.

[2] See the Preface to *Mornings in Florence*, Vol. XXIII. p. 293.

[3] See *Fors*, Letter 76, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 86).

volumes, all belonging (for the most part) to the same years of Ruskin's life, in which he addressed himself to the task of criticism, and of essays towards reconstruction, in politics, sociology, and education. Such were the labours which he imposed upon himself during what may be called his Oxford decade (1870–1878). The work was done, moreover, to the accompaniment of acute personal distress. Who can wonder that at the end Ruskin succumbed beneath the strain? "You know, without my telling it," wrote Sir John Simon to Professor Norton, "the utterly spendthrift way in which (with imagination less and less controlled by judgment) he has for these last years been at work with a dozen different irons in the fire—each enough to engage one average man's mind. And his emotions all the while as hard-worked as his intellect—they always blowing the bellows for its furnace. As I see what he has done, I wonder he has not broken down long ago."[1]

The impulse to the political and social work, of which *Fors Clavigera* was the outcome, came principally from a characteristic of Ruskin, already mentioned.[2] Unpractical as he is commonly called, and as in the vulgar sense he certainly was, Ruskin was strongly possessed by the instinct and passion for practice. His master, Carlyle, was content to storm and preach and rail, and disciples who went to sit at his feet often came away, filled, it may be, with divine rage, but no wiser, for any positive directions, than they went. Ruskin's desire was to do things, and to set others to doing them. "The day has come," he says, "for me to cease speaking, and begin doing, as best I may."[3] The plans which ultimately took shape in *Fors* had, as he says (p. 146), long been in his mind—certainly since 1867, as is shown by an entry in his diary already quoted.[4] Starting as a critic of painting, he had arrived at the conclusion that art, to be really fine, must be the representation of beautiful realities and be pursued in a spirit of delight. Proceeding as a critic of architecture, he had found this art to be the reflection of national character, and the secret of Gothic to consist in the happy life of the workman. The next step was, to one of his ardent temperament, clear and simple. He was not content to live in a world of the imagination; he strove to realise the conditions of the good and beautiful in the actual world—to build the Tabernacle of God among men.[5]

[1] *Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. ii. p. 147.
[2] See Vol. XII. p. lxxx., and Vol. XVI. pp. xxi.–xxii.
[3] Letter 58, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 426).
[4] See Vol. XIX. p. xxiv.
[5] See *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. p. 195.

Hence the teacher of art became necessarily also a social reformer. It was not that he wanted to be such, or that he felt himself in any way peculiarly qualified for the part. It was simply that he could not help it. The writing of *Fors Clavigera* and the starting of various attempts at practical reform in connexion with it were not of choice, but of necessity. They were a payment of ransom. "I simply cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like . . . because of the misery that I know of." He had to clear himself "from all sense of responsibility for this material distress," by doing what he could to point a way to the cure of it. "I began the writing of *Fors*," he says, "as a byework to quiet my conscience, that I might be happy in what I supposed to be my own proper life of art-teaching."[1]

The actual form which was assumed by Ruskin's payment of ransom may best be described and understood in connexion with the title of the book. What does "Fors Clavigera" mean?[2] What is the "Fortune with the Nail" which presided over the book? "My own conception of it," he tells us, "was first got from Horace[3]—from the description of Fortune drawn by the poet in the 35th Ode of the first book:—

> "With solemn face and firm, in awful state
> Before thee stalks inexorable Fate,
> And grasps empaling nails, and wedges dread,
> The hook tormentous, and the melted lead."[4]

The conception had fastened itself, some years before, in Ruskin's mind. In a book containing notes upon Horace's *Odes*, made during his sojourn at Mornex in 1861–1863, he describes the design upon a bronze mirror-case, in some museum, which illustrates the poet's idea of Fate. The design is founded upon the last fates of Meleager, whose slaying of his mother's brothers was to work his own undoing. The designer tells the story by "the figure (as Ruskin notes) of the death-goddess Atropos, who is on the point of driving a nail fast home with a hammer, the symbol of unalterably determined, or fixed, fate." There is a reference to Horace's figure of Fortune in a chapter of

[1] Letter 1, §§ 2, 3 (below, p. 13); and Letter 61, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 485).

[2] The title sometimes received curious transmutations from Mr. Allen's customers, such as "Clara Fogio," "Faws Cavongera." The correspondent who ordered "Fors Clavevinegar" was probably a wag. Ruskin was pleased when a letter from Austria, addressed only to "Fors Clavigero, Kent," was duly delivered by the Post Office.

[3] Letter 43, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 106).

[4] Translation by Dr. Philip Francis, 1747. The "clavos trabales" which Fortune carries in her hand are "spikes to fasten beams," and the "spikes of necessity" had passed into a proverb among the Romans (Cicero, *Verres*, 5, 12).

*Munera Pulveris* written at Mornex, where Ruskin speaks of "the fixed majesty of Necessitas with her iron nails," and in a note appended to the passage in 1872[1] he describes it as "a mere memorandum for the future work which I am now completing in *Fors Clavigera*." It is to the Etruscan mirror-case that Ruskin refers in a letter to his friend, Mr. Walter Severn, who had asked him in March 1875 what "Fors Clavigera" meant:—

> "The Fors is fortune, who is to the Life of men what Atropos is to their death, Unrepentant,—first represented, I believe, by the Etruscans as fastening a nail into a beam with a hammer (Jael to the Sisera of lost opportunity). My purpose is to show, in the lives of men, how their Fortune appoints things irreversibly, while yet they are accurately rewarded for effort and punished for cowardice and folly."[2]

But the title would not be Ruskin's unless it meant many things in one. He fixed on the title "Fors," he tells us, as being "the best part of three good English words—Force, Fortitude, and Fortune."[3] It was to include, in his references to it, the force which enables a wise and strong man to do good work, whether he lives or dies; the fortitude, which enables him to bear necessary pain in doing it; and the fortune which is his appointed fate. It is characteristic of the play of fancy in Ruskin's titles that each word in the title has three meanings in his mind. *Fors* stands for Force, Fortitude, and Fortune. *Clavigera* means that it bears either the club, the key, or the nail. Thus the Three "Forses" are Force with the club—the wise and strong man armed; Fortitude with the key—the patience which is portress at the gate of Art and Promise; and Fortune with the nail—"the fixed power of Necessity with her iron nails." Each aspect of "Fors" was associated with a particular hero. The first, with the strength of Hercules, or of deed; the second, with that of Ulysses, or of patience; the third, with that of Lycurgus, or of law (p. 28). It is to these three meanings—Courage, Patience, Fortune (p. 270 *n.*)—that Ruskin refers in many passages, where he speaks of "the first," "the second," or "the third Fors." In cases of difficulty, he says, it is the Second Fors who will teach us. "Bring the First with you, and the Third will help us" (p. 291). So, again, the "Second Fors" is said to be "faithfully observant of copyright and other dues."[4] The "Third

[1] Vol. XVII. p. 223 *n.*
[2] *The Life and Letters of Joseph Severn*, by Walter Sharp, 1892, p. 219.
[3] Letter 2, § 2 (p. 28).
[4] Vol. XXVIII. p. 499.

Fors" is constantly spoken of as the chance[1] which, in things large or small, governs a man's life; and especially in connexion with the casual arrangement of topics in the book. "I rather like," he says, "the Third Fors to take the order of them into her hands, out of mine;"[2] and "by help of the Third Fors, again and again in the course of these letters, the thing to my purpose has been brought before me just when I needed it."[3]

Later on in the book, however, Ruskin often abandons this identification of the three "Forses" with Courage, Patience, and Fortune.[4] Taking Fors in his third sense, he subdivides the orderings of Chance or Fortune to correspond with the Three Fates of the Greeks—Clotho, as he explains elsewhere,[5] being the fate which has power over the clue, thread, or connecting energy—that is, the conduct of life; Lachesis, the fate which ordains the chances that warp it; and Atropos, the inflexible, who cuts the thread for ever. These three Fates are spoken of in several places as the first, second, or third Fors, and the reader who does not bear in mind this alternative numbering of them will be somewhat confused. At times, however, the two ideas seem to mingle. Thus when he says that "the Second Fors" had ordained to place the Walkley Museum on the top of a high and steep hill,[6] he means primarily that such was the chance ordained by Lachesis; but he plays also on the idea of Patience, as tutress of the Arts: for, in the words of the poet, "knowledge is a steep that few may climb." But generally, in the latter part of the book, the Second, or the Third, Fors means simply the second, or the third, Fate. When a piece of work is broken off, it is to the ordinance of "Atropos, the Third Fors" that he attributes it.[7] Here the identification of the Third Fors with the Fate which cuts the thread is clear; an identification which he emphasises elsewhere by coupling this form of "Fors Clavigera," of Fate carrying a nail, with the name of Jael.[8] Yet sometimes, again, Atropos as a typical Fate is spoken of as Fortune

[1] Below, pp. 447, 467, 564, 620, 621. "If the reader cares to know what I mean by 'Fors,'" he says elsewhere, "let him read the page carefully"—the page recounting the chances which affected Scott's early life (*Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 14 *n.*).

[2] Below, p. 323. Compare pp. 315, 328, 382, 553; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 254, 335.

[3] Below, pp. 360, 489, 543, 662; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 90, 288.

[4] This point is implied in a note by Ruskin at p. 291, below.

[5] *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 394).

[6] Vol. XXVIII. p. 451.

[7] Vol. XXVIII. p. 443. Compare *ibid.*, p. 486.

[8] As above, in the letter to Mr. Walter Severn; and see Vol. XXVIII. p. 696 (and the title of Letter 69); and Vol. XXIX. p. 379.

(the Third Fors in his first system) generally, without any special reference to one or other of the Fates. It is Atropos, for instance, who, in ordering the succession of his subjects, "manages matters like the daintiest and watchfullest housewife"; and "Atropos, the Third Fors," his "careful and prudent mistress," who so makes things chance as to divide the better his political and artistic work.[1] Thus, then, the Second Fors sometimes means Patience, and sometimes the Chance which ordains the lot of men. The Third Fors sometimes means Chance or Fortune generally, and sometimes the third Fate, which cuts off the thread of life. Yet this Atropos, as we have just seen, means sometimes the fortune of life; and in the letter to Mr. Walter Severn the Fortune of *Fors* "is to the Life of men what Atropos is to their death." These crossings and interlacings in Ruskin's meanings, intricate even as the warp and woof in the web of fate, are very characteristic of him.

There are other meanings within meanings in the title which are worth noting as giving us a clue to the purposes and character of the book. The title, in its principal meaning was intended, he tells us, to be translated "Fortune, the Nail-bearer." Its object was to tell the reader how to make his fortune or to mar it—to make one's fortune being to rule his appointed fate to the best ends of which it is capable.[2] The book was thus to be a treatise on the Laws of Work. But also a treatise on the Laws of Life. For Fortune is a nail-bearer; "or in the full idea, nail-and-hammer bearing, driving the iron home with hammer-stroke, so that nothing shall be moved."[3] In one sense, each man is the architect of his own fortune; but in another, he is the sport of fate—the inheritor, for good or evil, of what former generations have thought and done and been. Of nations, as of men, it is true that

> "Our deeds still follow with us from afar,
> And what we have been makes us what we are."

Hence, another object of *Fors Clavigera* was to trace in art and history the power of the hidden Fors, or Destiny.[4] In tracing this power, the book itself was to be a nail-bearer. It was "to fasten in sure place the truths it had to teach"; and also to nail down, as on the barn-door, "the extreme follies of which it had to give warning."[5]

[1] Vol. XXVIII. pp. 551, 443. See also *ibid.*, pp. 488 *n.*, 504, 553.
[2] Below, p. 28.
[3] Below, p. 231.
[4] Below, pp. 46, 232.
[5] Vol. XXIX. pp. 14, 199, 379.

Here, then, we are promised a Treatise on Universal History, and a Compendium of the faults and follies of the age.

The scheme, it is seen, was to be extensive. But it was not to be a system. "By the adoption of the title 'Fors,' I meant (among other meanings)," says the author, "to indicate the desultory and accidental character of the work."[1] It was to discuss any matter which *chanced* to interest him. The reader was always to remember that "Fors is a *letter*, written as a letter should be written, frankly, and as the mood or topic chances."[2] The "Letters" were addressed "To the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain," but this was an address which Ruskin did not intend in the ordinary sense of the words. He wrote for all "fellow-workmen" with him, all labourers in the vineyard; including, as he explained, "masters, pastors, and princes" no less than the rank and file.[3]

A book thus motived and entitled was likely at the outset to be a book by itself. There is no other book in the world quite like it, and there are few books by any great writer about which different men have formed such different opinions. To the periodical press at the time the monthly instalments of *Fors Clavigera* were for the most part mere occasions for abuse or carping criticism. To the *Spectator*,[4] for instance, *Fors* seemed full of "watery and rambling verbiage" and "very silly and violent language." The hostile point of view was put by a living poet to whom all Ruskin's later writings seemed mere "studies in reviling and abusing."[5] To Carlyle, on the other hand, there was "nothing going on among us as notable to me as those fierce lightning-bolts Ruskin is desperately pouring into the black world of Anarchy all around him."[6] Nor is it only to readers approaching the book from Carlyle's sympathetic standpoint, that *Fors Clavigera* has seemed a notable production. "*Fors*," says Mr. Frederic Harrison, "is the typical work of the man John Ruskin, apart from his special studies and teaching in the arts. . . . It is Ruskin's *Hamlet*, and also his *Apocalypse*. . . . It flows on in one fascinating *causerie*, as it might fall from the lips of a perfect master in

[1] Letter 85, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 315).
[2] Letter 81, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 197).
[3] See below, pp. 448–449, and Vol. XXIX. p. 400.
[4] October 7, 1871.
[5] See William Watson's *Wordsworth's Grave and Other Poems*, 1890, p. 42 ("To John of Brantwood: after reading a Letter in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, February 15, 1886").
[6] *Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson*, vol. ii. p. 352. (The letter is given below, p. lxxxvii.)

the art of familiar conversation."[1] On the question of style there can hardly, I think, among the judicious, be two opinions. The book is written entirely in Ruskin's later manner. The "purple patches" have gone; and, though occasionally there are fine descriptive passages,[2] Ruskin now set himself deliberately to eschew ornament. He was tired of being called "a fine writer," when the readers, who thus acclaimed him, felt themselves free therefor to heed not a word he said.[3] He cultivated accordingly greater directness of speech; saying, as he puts it, "Sir, your house is on fire," instead of "Sir, the abode in which you probably passed the delightful days of your youth is in a state of inflammation."[4] *Fors*, besides showing other characteristics presently to be noticed, is, in point of style, a masterpiece of sustained vivacity and directness. "All the diction is fused," as an able critic has said, "in the fiery life."[5]

With regard to the substance of *Fors Clavigera*, wherever the truth may lie between opposing opinions, there are several considerations which are essential to forming a sound judgment of the book or to reading it aright. In the first place it is pre-eminently a personal book. In *Fors Clavigera*, more even than in any other of his works, Ruskin writes without reserve, with *abandon*, with utter self-revelation; here, therefore, even more than elsewhere, it is necessary to make full allowance for the personal equation, and to remember the circumstances and conditions in which the book was written. Take, for instance, the "biting, growling, grumbling" which stung Mr. Watson into protest. The note of petulance is unquestionably strong in *Fors Clavigera*, and one could string together a selection of passages which would seem to show Ruskin as entirely hopeless and helpless in presence of the problems of modern life. Carlyle said of the population of these islands that it was twenty-seven millions, mostly fools.[6] The pupil outdid his master, and apostrophises us in one place as "You fools everywhere" (p. 86). Our political ideals he dismisses as "the mad dog's creed of modernism."[7] Of our political methods he says that he never had given, and never meant to give a vote in his life (p. 544 *n.*). The House of Parliament is at best but "a mouldering toy";[8] and

[1] *John Ruskin* ("English Men of Letters" Series), 1902, pp. 182–184.
[2] See, for instance, the description of the Val di Niévole (below, p. 306), and that of Tweed and Ettrick in flood (Vol. XXIX. p. 461).
[3] Letter 58, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 425).
[4] Letter 23, § 8 (below, p. 400).
[5] Mrs. Meynell's *John Ruskin*, p. 283.
[6] See Vol. XII. p. 342.
[7] Letter 67, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 649).
[8] *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 451).

the Press, nothing but so many "square leagues of dirtily printed falsehood." As for the People, we may spell it with the biggest of capital Ps, but Ruskin calls it a "mob of money-begotten traitors." We shall not gain any stay of execution by pleading our religion, for "a knave's religion," he has told us in advance, "is the rottenest thing about him." As for modern literature, if plentiful, it is "pestilential"; and "modern science only ceases to be tiresome by becoming loathsome."[1] And so forth, and so forth. It might seem idle to take seriously a prophet who thus lightly draws an indictment against a nation, against a whole phase of civilisation.

One has to remember, however, not only the frank want of reserve which Ruskin permitted himself in this book, but also the circumstances in which he came to write it. *Fors Clavigera* was, as we have seen, a work by the way; a payment of ransom in order to win, if it might be, peace of mind for other things. Now the man who makes any one subject the study of his life's endeavour can afford to work and wait in patience. But though Ruskin had pondered long and deeply, his writing of these political Letters was, as it were, the expedition of a man in a hurry. "I want," he had said, "to disburthen my heart of the witness I have to bear, in order that I may be free to go back to my garden lawns, and paint birds and flowers there."[2] He appointed himself, as it were, his own Special Commissioner, charged to go and come back—bringing the millennium with him. And when it did not come—when so many of the actual conditions were unfavourable to it—terrible was the vexation of his soul. What caused his breakdown under the strain of his work, was, he says, not the quantity of the work itself, but the feeling that nothing came of it—a humiliation "resisted necessarily by a dangerous and lonely pride."[3]

The economist and the political philosopher are apt, again, to take general views, and, so far as human weaknesses permit, to approach questions without personal prejudice. But Ruskin wrote hotly, on the spur of the moment, under the immediate influence of external circumstances. "Never was a soul," says his friend, Professor Norton, "more open and accessible to immediate impressions, never one that responded with more sensitiveness or more instant sympathy to the appeals of nature or of man. It was like an Æolian harp, its strings

[1] Letters 67, 62 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 646, 515); *Time and Tide*, § 33 (Vol. XVII. p. 348); Letters 94 and 51 (Vol. XXIX. p. 480 *n.*, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 278).
[2] *Time and Tide*, § 69 (Vol. XVII. p. 377).
[3] Letter 88, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. p. 386).

quivering musically in serene days under the touch of the soft air; but, as the clouds gathered and the winds rose, vibrating in the blast with a tension that might break the sounding-board itself."[1] Never was a soul more accessible to immediate impressions—and hence never was there a writer whose words at any given place more require to be studied in relation to his point of view at the moment: "While I am looking at a sunset," he once said, "I forget the sunrise; but the next morning sunrise makes me forget the sunset."[2] In *Fors Clavigera*, written with the frankness of a diary or a familiar letter, every passing mood leaves its impress on the printed page, and Ruskin's extreme, and even morbid, sensitiveness colours the book throughout. "One seems almost," says Leslie Stephen, "to be listening to the cries of a man of genius, placed in a pillory to be pelted by a thick-skinned mob, and urged by a sense of his helplessness to utter the bitterest taunts that he can invent."[3] Like most criticisms of Ruskin which are well-founded, this is one which he has himself anticipated. He speaks of "the bitterness with which he feels the separation between himself and the people round him."[4] He is so "alone in his thoughts and ways" that he wonders sometimes whether it is he, or the world, that is mad.[5] The more he felt himself out of touch with the world round him, the greater licence did he allow to his pen. He wrote "imprudently, and even incontinently, because he could not for the moment hold his tongue about what vexed or interested him."[6] Also, he wrote without any of the arts of old parliamentary hands in qualifying their statements or leaving open their lines of retreat. Such ways were "inscrutable" to him; and for "qualification of statement" he had "neither time nor need."[7]

To give full licence to his pen meant with Ruskin not only to write with loaded emphasis, but to give rein to playful fancy and to work an abundant vein of irony and paradox. He has noted the inscrutable law by which the teaching of great men is often obscured by some strain of perversity; and "the strange habit of wise humanity to speak in enigmas only, so that the highest truths and

[1] Preface to the American "Brantwood" Edition of *Crown of Wild Olive*, p. ix.
[2] Preface to the American "Brantwood" Edition of *Aratra Pentelici*, p. vii.
[3] "Mr. Ruskin's Recent Writings," in *Fraser's Magazine*, June 1874, vol. 9, N.S., p. 689.
[4] Letter 45, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 146). Compare Letter 76, § 16 (Vol. XXIX. p. 98).
[5] Letter 48, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 206).
[6] Letter 88, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 384).
[7] Letters 87 and 81 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 364, 206).

usefullest laws must be hunted for through whole picture galleries of dreams, which to the vulgar seem dreams only."[1] And similarly, "Be sure," he says elsewhere, "if the author is worth anything you will not get at his meaning all at once—nay, that at his whole meaning you will not for a long time arrive in any wise. Not that he does not say what he means, and in strong words, too; but he cannot say it all; and what is more strange, *will* not, but in a hidden way, and in parables, in order that he may be sure you want it."[2] The words are peculiarly appropriate to his own *Fors Clavigera*, in which, one cannot doubt, he took a certain pleasure in provoking, stimulating, teasing, and even perplexing his readers. In one place he compares the clergy to candle-grease,[3] and in a succeeding Letter he insists to remonstrant correspondents that he meant his words quite literally. This correspondence, he wrote to a personal friend, "tickled" him.[4] To Mr. Allen, he wrote, of another Letter, "I'm very glad you enjoy the January *Fors*. I was rather tickled with it myself."[5] He expected all his friends to read the Letters, and to be duly shocked by them. Thus Rawdon Brown seems to have been a little startled by Letter 73, with its suggestion of Doges of Sheffield, and so forth. Ruskin's reply was that his "Papa" (as in familiar letters he used to call the old friend from whom he had learnt so much) might have found much worse things to be shocked at in an earlier Letter.[6] "I'm greatly wondering," he wrote again to his publisher (January 20, 1877), "what people will say to next *Fors*. This January one seems to have

[1] *Munera Pulveris*, § 87 (Vol. XVII. p. 208).
[2] *Sesame and Lilies*, § 13 (Vol. XVIII. p. 63).
[3] Letter 51, § 24 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 292).
[4] *Stray Letters from Professor Ruskin to a London Bibliopole* (F. S. Ellis), privately printed 1892, p. 25.
[5] January 1875.
[6] At Letter 60, p. 349 (of the original edition), in the copy of *Fors* in St. Mark's Library at Venice, Brown has inserted the following autograph letter:—

> "My Dear Papa,—It seems to me that Papas ought to be more interested in their son's books. You always expect me to read Mr. Cheney's; but surely you don't read my letters, though twelve in the year are many, yet they are so full of mischief I should have thought you would have looked after them before now. The two pages, 349, 350, of December '75 are far worse than this January. I return a volume I've had by me too long;—please, may I look at that book of Mr. Cheney's on the Mariegole?
>
> "Ever your grateful Figlio.
>
> "Please, the next time Toni comes, will you tell him to insist on having the money for those copies of Mariegole."

The reference in the postscript is to copies of the laws of some of the Venetian guilds from which Ruskin quoted in *Fors* (see Vol. XXIX. pp. 38, 42).

waked them up a bit at Sheffield"; and to the same correspondent, a week later, "You'll see a wonderful lot of things exploding in people's eyes soon about our work. *Fors* of February ought to be a choker." Ruskin in this book was often letting off squibs to explode in the path of dull respectability. But that was not all. To his habit of speaking in riddling words, one must add the foible, which grew upon him with the growth of years and of a surrounding circle of admirers waiting upon his every utterance, of laying down the law on every conceivable subject. The result of all this was to expose *Fors Clavigera* in equal measure to the contempt of the scoffers and the misunderstanding of the devout. While some casual readers (such as the hasty reviewers of a periodical press) were content to turn away from the whole thing as futile, others, whose discretion was not equal to their devotion, were wont to mistake dreams for realities, and ironical paradoxes for practical injunctions. A certain quality of humour, and tact for discrimination, are necessary for the right reading of Ruskin. I have been told a story (for the complete authenticity of which, however, I cannot vouch) of a devoted disciple who, pondering in his mind the Master's diatribes against railways, came to the conclusion that even to send a letter by the post was to parley with the Evil One. He spent accordingly a large part of an innocent life in tramping about the country delivering letters in person upon his friends. At last he reached Brantwood. He departed thence a sadder, but not, I fear, a wiser man; for when Ruskin gently told him that he was a fool, and pointed to his own practice, which was to abuse railways, but meanwhile to use them,[1] the disciple's comment was that "it was grievous to discover that the Master himself was no true Ruskinian."

One other characteristic of *Fors Clavigera* must be noticed; for though it is extremely obvious at the most hasty glance, there are some aspects of it which reveal themselves only to a diligent reader. The book is wildly discursive. It ranges at will from Monmouth to Macedon, from China to Peru, from Giotto to goose-pie. No one has chaffed the book in this matter more piquantly than Ruskin himself. "I can well conceive," he says, "how irritating it must be to any one chancing to take special interest in any one part of my subject, to find me, or lose me, wandering away from it for a year or two."[2] His "eddies of thought" turned him, he confesses, "into apparently irrelevant, and certainly unprogressive inlets"; and in discoursing on

[1] See Letter 49, § 15 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 247).
[2] Letter 50, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 254).

the course of true love in the Waverley Novels, he had to exercise some self-restraint in not proceeding to show the connexion of this topic with "railways, joint-stock banks, the landed interest, the parliamentary interest, grouse shooting, lawn tennis, monthly magazines, spring fashions, and Christmas cards."[1] He often knows not where to begin, by reason of "the thousand things flitting in my mind, like seabirds for which there are no sands to settle upon."[2] Nothing settles itself down in *Fors Clavigera* for long at a time, and this is a characteristic which annoys some readers. "What puzzles me," wrote James Russell Lowell, "and sometimes bores me in Gladstone is that he takes as much interest in one thing as another, and is as diffusively emphatic about it."[3] Many persons, without admitting the boredom in either case, must recognise that what Lowell said of Gladstone's conversation is true of Ruskin's printed talk in *Fors Clavigera*. "Don't read me *wiggling* books," said Leslie Stephen in the nursery to his mother. "He liked to have a great deal on one subject, and to have it in regular order."[4] That, perhaps, was one reason why he found *Fors Clavigera* little to his taste, for it is eminently a book that "wiggles." It may indeed, in one aspect of it, be called a Commonplace Book, in which the author jots down his thoughts, impressions, fancies, as the "Fors" of the day dictated. But this is by no means the whole truth about the discursiveness of *Fors Clavigera*. It lends to the book a compensating charm, and the discursiveness is found, on a close reading, to be not inconsistent with real unity of purpose and drift. On the former point, Mr. Frederic Harrison's characterisation seems to me (so far as it reaches) very true:—

"*Fors* (he says) produces on us the effect of some strange electrical disturbance in the heavens, which we watch with wonder and admiration, constantly struck by some unexpected flash, from whence coming, whither going, we know not, but always beautiful and profoundly impressive. . . . It is written in a style of which there is no other example in the language —a style of measured *abandon*, of surrender to any fancy, whim, association of the passing moment. Nothing so utterly inconsequent, so rambling, so heterogeneous exists in print. And yet, the connotations of ideas are so fantastic, and the transitions so original, that the effect of the whole is charming as well as exciting."[5]

[1] Letter 91, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 445).
[2] Letter 60, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 460).
[3] *Letters of James Russell Lowell*, edited by C. E. Norton, 1894, vol. ii. p. 321.
[4] *Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*, by F. W. Maitland, 1906, p. 25.
[5] *John Ruskin*, 1902, pp. 183, 184.

This is admirably said, but Ruskin himself would somewhat have qualified it. "I tried always in *Fors*," he says, "to say things, if I could, a little piquantly"; and "whether I succeeded in writing piquantly, or not, I certainly often wrote obscurely." So he said in *Præterita*;[1] and in re-reading *Fors* at the same time, he constantly wrote in the margin that such and such a passage was "obscure."[2] "People could not generally see the drift," he notes in one place; "it is all too fine-run and the mocking too quiet."[3] Where Ruskin marked in his copy that such and such a passage was intended literally, or on the contrary that it was otherwise to be taken, his notes have been transcribed.[4] The editors have not taken upon themselves to say on their own account "*N.B.*—This is ironical." The irony is for the most part obvious enough; and the book is meant to be read, as Ruskin says, by readers who "use their own wits."[5] But pains have been taken to explain the references and allusions. The meaning of the words may be intelligible enough without such explanations; but not the full meaning of the sentences.

Again, the three volumes which now contain *Fors Clavigera*, have been all treated together, and cross-references copiously supplied. It is only by this means that the author's full purpose and consistent scheme can be illustrated, or even that the meaning of particular passages can become really intelligible. *Fors* is a very long book. It contains about 650,000 words (or about four times as many as an old three-volume novel). Though it was written in parts and at intervals, Ruskin not only keeps hold of a main thread throughout, but he is constantly picking up, at a later stage, allusions, persons, incidents which he first introduced earlier in the journey. Except to a reader who tackles the book consecutively and is blessed with a very retentive memory, *Fors Clavigera* must remain somewhat puzzling without abundant cross-references. One of Ruskin's literary tricks is worth noting in this connexion. Carlyle was a humourist in types; he invents his Teufelsdröckh, his Bobus of Houndsditch, his Smelfungus. Ruskin, like Matthew Arnold, seizes upon particular individuals, actual incidents, chance phrases, drops them and takes them up again, plays with them, worries them, turns them inside out, and introduces them in many an out-of-the-way connexion. It may be doubted whether many readers

[1] See i. ch. ii. § 55.
[2] See, for instance, below, p. 496.
[3] This note is below, at p. 544. Compare p. 606 *n*.
[4] See, for instance, below, p. 606; and Vol. XXVIII. p. 350 *n*.
[5] Letter 40, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 62).

of *Fors Clavigera* would recognise at sight, meeting them on chance pages, the gospel of the Ho's, Mr. Lyttel, Mr. Tipple, and Mr. M'Cosh, the ninety-two newspapers, the permutations in Chillianwallah, the preacher of "carnivorous" economy, or even "the greatest thinker in England."

Finally, Ruskin's Index to the book has been completed, and printed at the end of it.[1] In thus presenting *Fors Clavigera*, the editors have sought to carry out Ruskin's intention of incorporating the Letters "as a single work" in the consecutive series of his works;[2] while in the present Introduction my object has been to resolve the perplexity, at which Ruskin does not wonder, on the part even of his "most studious friends," to make out "what the contents of *Fors* really are, broken up as these materials have been into a mere moraine of separate and seemingly jointless stones."[3]

Looking, then, at the contents of *Fors Clavigera* as a whole, what do we find that it contains? The contents may be grouped, I think, under six descriptions of the book. (1) It is a Miscellany. (2) It is a treatise on Social Economy in the form of a criticism of the nineteenth century. (3) It is an essay in social reconstruction, or a study in Utopia; in which connexion it becomes (in its later numbers) the monthly organ of a Society, the St. George's Guild. (4) It is an Essay on the Principles of Education. (5) It is a book of Personal Confessions. (6) And, finally, it is a Confession of Faith. In the following pages *Fors Clavigera* will be considered, successively, in these different aspects.

(1)

First, then, *Fors Clavigera* is a Miscellany—a collection of studies *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*. It may be helpful, if only by way of rough index, to bring some of these scattered studies together. A considerable proportion of the total bulk of *Fors Clavigera* is occupied with Readings in History and Literature. Ruskin's favourite studies and authors here come before us, as he puts down from month to month his notes on books read, or transcribes passages which had

[1] A Bibliographical Note in Vol. XXIX. gives particulars about this Index.
[2] See Letter 73, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 13).
[3] Letter 85, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 322).

specially struck him. Arranging these readings, more or less in the chronological order of their subject-matter, we may mention, first,

*Studies in Greek Mythology and History.*—Greek Mythology, as we have seen in earlier volumes,[1] was a subject which had a great fascination for Ruskin, the fluidity of myths affording a tempting scope for the play of his fancy and the exercise of his ingenuity. Among the myths thus touched upon in *Fors* are the life-story of Theseus; the "translation" of the Charioteer; the myths of Apollo and Marsyas; the legends of Dædalus and the Labyrinth; and the relations of Æacus, Minos, and Rhadamanthus.[2] Ruskin made no sharp division between the mythical and the historical, and with what he says about Theseus may be connected his references to the laws of Lycurgus and to Spartan theories of property and punishment.[3] Under this same head come the frequent references in *Fors* to the classics—to the Orphic Hymns, to Hesiod, to Herodotus, to Livy, Virgil, and Horace. It was in the best literature of any age that Ruskin found the surest guidance to its spirit.

*Readings in Plato.*—His own daily reading, as we have heard,[4] was in Plato; and *Fors Clavigera*, alike in its character of the author's commonplace book and in its aspect as a study in Utopia, abounds in passages from the *Republic* and the *Laws*. Every man, as some one has said, is born an Aristotelian or a Platonist. Ruskin was of Plato's school, and he was ever forward to "praise famous men and our fathers that begat us . . . men renowned for their power, giving counsel by their understanding, and declaring prophecies." It is to the prophecies of Plato that Ruskin turns for support of his own counsels and paradoxes. There will be something more to be said on this subject when we come to consider Ruskin's scheme of education (p. lxxiii.); meanwhile, among the scattered readings in Plato, are:—

The City of the Soul (*Rep.*, ix.): Letter 37 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 23–24).

The Sacredness of the Soul (*Laws*, v.): Letter 70 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 724–725).

"Our Battle is Immortal" (*Laws*, x.): Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 82–83).

Crimes against the Gods (*Laws*, ix.): Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. p. 226).

[1] Vol. XIX. p. lxv.; Vol. XX. p. lvii.

[2] For these, see (1) Letters 22, 23, 24, 28 (below, pp. 384, 386, 398–409, 426–430, 510–512); (2) Letter 24 (below, pp. 418–419); (3) Letter 83 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 271–272); (4) Letters 23 and 28 (below, pp. 403, 510); and (5) Letters 23 and 82 (below, pp. 409–410, and Vol. XXIX. p. 225 *n.*).

[3] For Lycurgus, see Letters 2, 27, 68 (below, pp. 29, 502; Vol. XXVIII. p. 667). For the other topic, Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 221–223).

[4] Vol. XXIV. p. xliv.

Belief in the Gods, the foundation of good Law (*Laws*, xii.): Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 227–228).

The Guardians and the Laws (*Laws*, vi.): Letter 78 (Vol. XXIX. p. 189).

The Unwritten and Constant Laws (*Laws*, iii., vii.): Letter 80 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 177–178).

Principles of Education (*Laws*, vii., ii.): Letters 82, 83 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 231–241, 258–262).

"Theuth's Writing Lessons" (*Phædrus*): Letters 17 (below, pp. 294–295) and 94 (Vol. XXIX. p. 483).

Greek conception of Music (*Laws*, ii., vii.): Letters 73, 82, 83 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 24–26, 241, 257–262).

Greek conception of Leisure (*Laws*, viii.): Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 253–254).

Tragedy (*Laws*, vii.): Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 234–235).

*Readings in the Bible.*—With the daily reading of Plato, Ruskin combined that of the Bible. The conjunction takes us to the heart of much of his philosophy. For "much of Ruskin's work," it has been well said, "has been the attempt to unite Hellenic and Christian ideals."[1] He sought to show that industry without art is brutality; but, on the other hand, that life without industry is guilt.[2] To Ruskin all great Art is the expression of man's delight in God's work,[3] while true religion is to be found not in contemplation of a future heaven, but in work in a present world which shall be the realisation of deity. He was a believer in the continuity of inspiration; he sought and found "the Word of God" in literature alike "profane" and "sacred"; and thus it was natural for him to pass from readings in Plato to readings in the Bible. To enumerate all the quotations, translations, expositions, adaptations which Ruskin makes in *Fors Clavigera* from the Bible would occupy several pages.[4] The footnotes supply all the references, which in this book are more frequent even than in other of Ruskin's works. *Fors Clavigera* was in large part written during years when his standpoint had again become more distinctively Christian. He remarks in the course of his autobiographical reminiscences that his early Bible lessons were "the one essential part"[5] of his education,

[1] *A Disciple of Plato: a Critical Study of John Ruskin*, by William Smart, 1883, p. 21.

[2] *Lectures on Art*, § 95 (Vol. XX. p. 93).

[3] *Two Paths*, § 48 (Vol. XVI. p. 290).

[4] In Mr. Faunthorpe's *Index to "Fors Clavigera,"* the entry "Bible" occupies eleven pages, mostly of small print, in double columns, and even so the list is not complete.

[5] Letter 42 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 101–102).

and he finds in similar studies material for the education which he most desired to commend to his readers. He was a born preacher, and he remarks with some impatience upon the shallowness of most professional sermons. Clergymen, in search of fresh points and original illustrations for their discourses, may be advised to turn to *Fors Clavigera*.[1] Ruskin speaks in *Fors* of his devotion to St. Francis, and elsewhere of himself as almost a Brother of the Third Order.[2] In his use of the Bible, Ruskin closely follows St. Francis, whose writings (it has been said) "abound not only in allegory and personification, but also in quaint concepts and naïve deductions. His final argument is often a text of Holy Scripture, which he uses with a familiarity and freedom altogether remarkable. Indeed there are parts of his writings in which the interweaving of Scriptural phrases is so intricate as almost to defy any attempt to indicate them by references, the more so since the Biblical language adopted by St. Francis is not always taken from the Bible, but often from the Liturgy, Missal, and Breviary."[3] These remarks precisely apply to *Fors Clavigera*. One is constantly struck by the quaint and unfamiliar use of familiar texts; as, for instance, when Ruskin translates the vision of Abram into modern terms: "Fear not, Sir Stafford, I am thy Devastation; and thou shalt have an exceeding great surplus."[4] The actual quotations from the Bible are very numerous, but indication by references is sometimes almost impossible, so closely is the Biblical language interwoven in the texture of Ruskin's sentences. He is not always satisfied with the translation in the Authorised Version; he charges it with many imperfections, and principally with violation of the first rule of honest translation, namely, always to render the same word by the same equivalent.[5] He has the Vulgate and the Septuagint[6] at hand, and utilises now the Latin, and now the Greek, according as it seems to him to be most significant in meaning, or sonorous in sound. The

[1] Commentators on Ruskin should ever keep Cruden's *Concordance* at their side. In *The Bible of Amiens* (ch. ii. § 48), Ruskin says of Clovis after his conversion that "the Frank leopard had not so wholly changed his spots as to surrender to an enemy the opportunity of a first spring." A French editor explains "Allusion, me dit Robert d'Humières, à ce proverbe anglais: 'L'Ethiopien ne peut changer sa peau ni le léopard ses taches.'" Such is fame, even with the prophet Jeremiah.

[2] Vol. XXIII. p. xlvii.

[3] *The Writings of Saint Francis of Assisi, newly translated into English, with an Introduction and Notes*, by Father Paschal Robinson, 1906, p. xv.

[4] Letter 65, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 590).

[5] See below, p. 202 *n.*, where other passages to like effect are collected.

[6] Ruskin, as we have seen (Vol. I. p. xxxiii.), had at one time a little Hebrew also; but he did not pursue the study in later years.

following list gives only the longer and more important of the Bible readings included in *Fors*:—

The Word of God: Letter 36 (below, pp. 669–672).
The meaning of Christmas; the Life of Christ and its Lessons: Letter 12 (below, pp. 217–220).
The Parables of Christ: Letter 68 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 667–668).
Genesis x.: Letters 61 and 62 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 496–499, 522–523).
Genesis xv.: Letter 65 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 587–601).
Leviticus xxv., 35–37: Letter 68 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 672–673).
Joshua xxiv. 15: Letter 84 (Vol. XXIX. p. 293).
The story of Joab: Letter 40 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 70–72).
Psalm viii.: Letter 53 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 324–328).
Psalm xiv., xv.: Letters 23 and 36 (below, pp. 415–416, 672–676).
Psalm xix. expounded: Letter 75 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 55–57).
Psalm lviii.: Letter 66 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 615–616).
Psalm xcvi.: Letter 48 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 217).
Proverbs i.: Letter 87 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 374–378).
Wisdom xiii.: Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. p. 229).
Wisdom xv., xvi.: Letter 53 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 333–334).
Book of Tobit: Letter 74 (Vol. XXIX. p. 35).
Isaiah vi. 5: Letter 45 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 145–146).
Isaiah xvi.: Letter 66 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 617).
Isaiah liv. 11–17: Letter 8 (below, pp. 144–145).
Nahum: Letter 65 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 600, 601).
Matthew xxiv.: Letter 84 (Vol. XXIX. p. 288).
John ii. 3, 5: Letter 84 (Vol. XXIX. p. 286).
John xiv. 2 (the "mansions" of God): Letter 27 (below, pp. 489, 490).
John xvi. 32 ("Your own place"): Letter 28 (below, pp. 507–508).
John xxi.: Letter 74 (Vol. XXIX. p. 37).
Ephesians vi. 14–17: Letter 48 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 215–216).
First Epistle to Timothy ii. 8: Letter 25 (below, pp. 467–468).
Hebrews i., ii.: Letter 53 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 329–330).
First Epistle of John: Letter 81 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 192–193).
Epistle of Jude: Letters 76 and 77 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 93–95, 108–111).
Revelation ii., iii.: Letter 84 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 296–304).
Revelation xx. 13: Letter 72 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 759).

*Readings in Virgil.*—Next to the Bible, the books which Ruskin wished all his disciples to be familiar with were those of Plato, Virgil, Dante, Carpaccio, and Shakespeare.[1] With Plato we have dealt

[1] Letters 18, § 13 (below, p. 314), and 71, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 732).

already, and so we come next to his references to Virgil. These are hardly so numerous as might be expected from the importance he attached to the poet; but it should be noted that Ruskin intended to issue a translation of the first two *Georgics* and of the sixth *Æneid*, as a volume in his *Bibliotheca Pastorum*, adding to it the first two books of Livy, "for completion of the image of Roman life."[1] Similarly, there is even less in *Fors Clavigera* of two other favourite authors—Hesiod and Xenophon—because both were reserved for separate treatment in the same series, supplementary to *Fors*. Virgilian references will be found, however, in Letters 8 and 66.[2]

*Readings in Dante.*—After Virgil, Ruskin mentioned Dante, and there is probably no book, other than the Bible, to which there are more references in his writings than the *Divina Commedia*. In this respect *Fors* is no exception to the rule. Here, as in the case of the Bible, the words, images, and thoughts of Dante are much interwoven with Ruskin's text. The General Index must be consulted for the scattered references; the longer passages are those discussing the lake of pitch, the divisions of Hell, and the circle of fraud.[3]

*Studies in Shakespeare.*—The "author" whom Ruskin named next to Dante is Carpaccio. This collocation of a painter among poets and philosophers is characteristic. Ruskin's final test of painters was the number and nobility of their ideas.[4] He would have agreed with the remark of Jean François Millet, who, when a young painter came to lay his accomplishments at the master's feet, replied, "It is well, and you can paint; but what have you to say?"[5] The medium may be song, dialogue, epic, or painting; it is the message—the beautiful thought in beautiful form—that gives lasting vitality to each alike. Here, however, it will be more convenient to notice Ruskin's studies in Carpaccio under the head of painting; and thus we come to the last of his five selected authors. The order, it should be explained, was not of merit—none is first among the Kingdom of Heaven; the five authors were representative of the five cities, whose history Ruskin wished his readers to study—Plato of Athens, Virgil of Rome, Dante of Florence, Carpaccio of Venice, and Shakespeare of London. Scattered

[1] Letter 61, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 500).

[2] Below, pp. 143–144; Vol. XXVIII. p. 622.

[3] For these passages, see (1) Letter 18 (below, pp. 313–314); (2) Letters 23 and 24 (below, pp. 410–412, 423–428); (3) Letter 72 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 764–765).

[4] *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 92).

[5] John La Farge, *Considerations on Painting*, New York, 1895, p. 20. To like effect, Sir Walter Scott: "A painting should, to be excellent, have something to say to the mind of a man" (Lockhart, vol. vi. p. 234).

references and allusions to Shakespeare are very numerous in *Fors;* among more considerable notices, an analysis of a favourite passage of Ruskin's in *King Richard II.* may be mentioned, as also discussions upon the moral law in the Tragedies and upon the close of *Romeo and Juliet.*[1]

*Readings in Froissart.*—Shakespeare, as we have seen, was taken by Ruskin as the author best representative of England. Our order brings us, therefore, next to other studies in English history and literature; and, first among them, to Froissart—an author, by the way, who did not at first appeal greatly to Ruskin,[2] and whose true spirit he may have been the more anxious on that account to illustrate. He quotes from the *Chronicles*, with various comment, the accounts of the battle of Crécy and of the siege of Calais, and of the meeting of Edward III. and Alice of Salisbury.[3]

*Studies in Heraldry.*—Connected with Froissart in spirit, as also roughly in time, are various studies in Heraldry. This, as we have seen in earlier volumes (especially in *The Laws of Fésole*, *Eagle's Nest*, and *Val d'Arno*) was a favourite subject with Ruskin, and it is often introduced in *Fors Clavigera.* Thus he takes a florin, and gives an interesting discourse on the Royal Arms of the United Kingdom. He picks up a phrase in Froissart—"so they were served"—and discusses the Prince of Wales's Feathers. Froissart's story of Alice of Salisbury suggests the traditional account of the Order of the Garter, and this in turn leads to a discussion of the Scottish Arms.[4]

*Readings in Chaucer* and "*The Romaunt of the Rose.*"—In a literary miscellany intended, as was *Fors Clavigera* (in this aspect of it), to have a historical purpose, Chaucer naturally occupied frequent place, and with Chaucer he grouped the French chivalric literature which the English poet partly translated. Chaucer is, says Ruskin, "the most perfect type of a true English mind in its best possible temper."[5] An edition of selections from Chaucer was, therefore, among the volumes which Ruskin designed for his Library of Classical Literature.[6] This part of the design was not to be accomplished; but a reference to the General Index will show how frequently Ruskin read his author,

[1] See Letters 25 (below, pp. 459-460); 83 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 266-267); and 91 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 446, 447).

[2] See (in a later volume of this edition) his letter to C. E. Norton of February 28, 1858.

[3] See Letters 4, 25, and 31 (below, pp. 72-74, 460-464, 570-571).

[4] See Letters 25, 28 (below, pp. 454-458, 512-513).

[5] *Lectures on Art*, § 14 (Vol. XX. p. 29).

[6] *Letter* 61, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 500).

while in *Fors Clavigera* we have readings from the *Legende of Goode Women*, from the *Romaunt of the Rose*, and studies in "Largesse" and "Franchise";[1] while quotations from the *Book of a Hundred Ballads* are given in Letters 15 and 32.[2]

*Other Readings in English History.*—Under this head come notices of the story of Henry II. and his rebellious sons (Letter 3); of the character and laws of Richard I. (*ibid.*[3]); the relations of Ascham and Lady Jane Grey (Letter 54[4]); the life and writings of Sir Thomas More (Letters 6 and 7[5]); notices of Elizabethan voyages (Letters 13 and 22[6]); and studies of Sir Philip Sidney (Letters 35, 36, 55, 66[7]). Finally, among this group of subjects, we come to one of the most popular strains in the miscellany; namely,

*Notes on the Life and Works of Sir Walter Scott*—a thread in the pages of *Fors Clavigera* which many readers found so attractive that they begged Ruskin to drop the other threads and continue only with this (a piece of advice which probably had a precisely contrary effect[8]).

Outline of Scott's Ancestry and Early Life (1771–1776): Letters 31, 32, 33 (below, pp. 563–597, 608–621).

Scott's Homes: (1) Rosebank, Letter 92 (Vol. XXIX. p. 460); (2) Lasswade, Letter 29 (below, p. 531); (3) Ashestiel and Abbotsford, Letters 47 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 198), and 92 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 460–464).

Scott's Excursions: Letter 44 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 130–131).

Scott and Mungo Park: Letter 92 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 452–454).

Scott and his Servants: Letter 32 (below, pp. 599–601).

Scott on the Poor Laws: Letter 27 (below, pp. 500–502).

Notes on Scott's Character: Letter 32 (below, pp. 584, 597–598).

Scott's genius Epic, not Dramatic: Letter 34 (below, pp. 628–631).

Analysis of *Redgauntlet*: Letter 47 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 189–198).

The Supernatural Element: Letter 92 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 454–456).

Unconsciousness of his Genius: Letter 33 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 263–265).

The foregoing summaries are by no means exhaustive. If they were, reference would have to be made to notices of Goldsmith, Addison,

[1] For these passages, see (1) Letter 23 (below, p. 406); (2) Letters 24 and 34 (below, pp. 433–435, 624–626; (3) Letter 45 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 160–163); and (4) Letter 43 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 114–115).

[2] Below, pp. 263, 601.

[3] See below, pp. 52–53, 53–59.

[4] Vol. XXVIII. pp. 353–356.

[5] See below, pp. 113, 117–119.

[6] See below, pp. 237–239, 385–386.

[7] Below, pp. 651–656, 671; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 373–374, 624–625.

[8] See the opening of Letter 33 (below, p. 606).

Fielding, Miss Edgeworth, Miss Martineau, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Emerson, Thackeray, Dickens, George Eliot, and many other writers; and among foreign authors, to Goethe, Balzac, Gaboriau. But the longer, and more important, notices included in Ruskin's Miscellany as typical of various phases in English life and thought have now been indicated. Another general category, under which the miscellaneous literary contents of *Fors Clavigera* may be arranged, is that of STUDIES OF COUNTRY LIFE. It is from this point of view, as also from that of studies in purity or simplicity of style, that Ruskin directed his disciples to Marmontel and Gotthelf.

***Readings in Marmontel.***—We have heard from Ruskin already that Marmontel was one of "the persons in past history" with whom he "had most sympathy."[1] Any reader, who is not familiar with Marmontel already, will understand this sympathy the better after referring to the places in *Fors*, where Ruskin gives translations from the *Autobiography*, *The Misanthrope Corrected*, and *The Scruple*.[2] It is the old peasant life in France, reflected in Marmontel's pages as in the placid surface of some country pool, that appealed so strongly to Ruskin; and with the passages, above noted, we may connect the extracts from John Moore's Journal, descriptive of French society and manners, as still subsisting on the eve of the Revolution (Letter 29, below, pp. 538–541).

***Readings in Gotthelf.***—It was from the same standpoint—from a desire to show the conditions of rural life "where men and women are perfectly happy and good, without any iron servants"[3]—that Ruskin attached so much importance to his extracts from Gotthelf, comprising, in various places of *Fors*, a complete translation of his story of *The Broom Merchant*.[4] The Swiss tales by this writer appealed strongly to Ruskin, both for their quiet and unaffected simplicity of style, and for their pictures of pastoral life. They were to form part of the Library which he projected in connexion with *Fors Clavigera*, and a translation of one of Gotthelf's books duly appeared, with a preface and notes by Ruskin, in 1888 (Vol. XXXII.). With Gotthelf, we may connect various pages, either in the text or in the "Notes and Correspondence" of *Fors*, which contain other studies in peasant life. In

[1] *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface of 1871 (Vol. XVIII. p. 48).

[2] For these passages, see (1) Letter 14 (below, pp. 251-254); (2) Letters 17 and 40 (below, pp. 300–303, and Vol. XXVIII. pp. 62–65); and (3) Letter 21 (below, pp. 366–367).

[3] *See below*, p. 88.

[4] *Letters 30, 34, 39, 55* (below, pp. 548–553, 632–635; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 55–60, 366–372).

passing through the press (as he explains[1]) his separate volumes of studies in Birds, Flowers, and Stones. Sometimes, however, his studies in natural history overflowed into the all-embracing pages of *Fors;* and thus we find in the book discussions on the theories of glacier-motion; remarks on bees and shells; and notes on streams and inundations.[2]

Two other categories remain to be noticed, among those comprising the miscellaneous contents of *Fors Clavigera.* One is Ruskin's Autobiography; but this may more conveniently be reserved for later notice (below, p. lxxvi.). The other comprises passages which defy classification. One might call it Ruskin's basket of the wares of Autolycus. The collection of *olla podrida* contains, among other things, a discussion of the London cabman's hypotenuse, the Drury Lane Pantomime, and the use of holes in a fire shovel.

A book containing such a variety of topics, treated not consecutively (as rearranged in the foregoing lists), but apparently haphazard, may well seem to the casual reader to be a mighty maze without a plan. It pleased Ruskin to attribute the arrangement of his material wholly to his mistress, Chance; but there is such a thing as choice in accepting or refusing the promptings of chance, and there is an art which hides the art. We shall see in the end, I think, that what Ruskin elsewhere says is true: the Letters of *Fors Clavigera* are "a mosaic-work," in which the pieces are "set, indeed, in patches, but not without design."[3] Still, of the miscellaneous contents of the book hitherto noticed, it may be said that they are not essential parts of its design. The omission of them, though it would deprive the book of variety and charm, would leave the main argument intact. They are episodes, illustrations, and examples; they are not part of the framework.

(2)

Separating the incidental and the illustrative elements from the essentials of the book, we may describe *Fors Clavigera* as (*a*) a criticism of the later decades of the nineteenth century, and (*b*) as an essay in social reconstruction. These two aspects of the book are in Ruskin's treatment closely blended; one can hardly say anywhere of

[1] Letter 60 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 460, 461).

[2] For these subjects, see (1) Letters 34, 35, 43 (below, pp. 635–643, 647, 662–663; Vol. XXVIII. p. 123); (2) Letters 51, 52, 62, 63, 64 (*ibid.*, pp. 276–286, 304–310, 526–527, 551–555, 584; (3) Letters 19, 85, 86 (below, pp. 324–327; Vol. XXIX. pp. 332–334, 345–349).

[3] Letter 36, § 2 (below, p. 669).

this Letter that it deals with the one subject, or of that Letter that it deals with the other. But, in order to analyse the book, the two aspects may conveniently be treated in separate order.

The criticism of the nineteenth century which runs through the book from its first page to the last is deeply coloured by the influence of Carlyle. Ruskin in one Letter speaks of his work in *Fors Clavigera* as being done "with only one man in England—Thomas Carlyle—to whom I can look for steady guidance."[1] The opening passage of the book, in which, "looking down from Ingleborough," Ruskin describes England as sunk in "misery and beggary," recalls—and, I doubt not, was meant to recall—the words with which Carlyle, thirty years before, opened his *Past and Present*:—

"The condition of England is justly regarded as one of the most ominous, and withal one of the strangest ever seen in this world. England is full of wealth, of multifarious produce, supply for human want in every kind; yet England is dying of inanition."[2]

And there is a letter of Carlyle's, written in 1874, which in its turn recalls, and sounds as a summary or echo of much that Ruskin had been writing in *Fors Clavigera*. The letter, which is incidentally referred to by one of Ruskin's correspondents in *Fors*,[3] appeared in the *Times* of January 28 in that year, and has not, I think, hitherto been reprinted. It was addressed to Sir Joseph Whitworth, in connexion with some philanthropic plans of that captain of industry for the benefit of his workmen:—

"Would to Heaven," wrote Carlyle, "all or many of the captains of industry in England had a soul in them such as yours, and could do as you have done, or could still further co-operate with you in works and plans to like effect! The look of England to me is at this moment abundantly ominous, the question of capital and labour growing every year more anarchical, insoluble by the notions hitherto applied to it, pretty certain to issue in Petroleum one day, unless some other gospel than that of the Dismal Science come to illuminate it. Two things are pretty sure to me. The first is that capital and labour never can or will agree together till they both first of all decide on doing their work faithfully throughout, and like men of conscience and honour, whose highest aim is

[1] Letter 37 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 22). So, in his *Report* of January 1886 on the St. George's Guild, Ruskin speaks of his scheme as "following Carlyle's grander exhortation in *Past and Present*" (Vol. XXX.).

[2] Compare Ruskin's *Lectures on Art*, § 123 (Vol. XX. p. 114).

[3] See Letter 44, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 142).

to behave like faithful citizens of this universe, and obey the eternal commandment of Almighty God who made them. The second thing is that a sadder object even than that of the coal strike, or any conceivable strike, is the fact that, loosely speaking, we may say all England has decided that the profitablest way is to do its work ill, slimly, swiftly, and mendaciously. What a contrast between now and say only one hundred years ago! At the latter date, or still more conspicuously for ages before it, all England awoke to its work with an invocation to the Eternal Maker to bless them in their day's labour, and help them to do it well. Now all England, shopkeepers, workmen, all manner of competing labourers, awaken as it were with an unspoken but heartfelt prayer to Beelzebub, 'Oh help us, thou great Lord of shoddy, adulteration, and malfeasance, to do our work with the *maximum* of slimness, swiftness, profit, and mendacity, for the Devil's sake. Amen.'"

Carlyle's letter serves not inaptly as a summary of those which Ruskin addressed "To the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain." The letter gives Ruskin's point of view, or rather one of his points of view, for Ruskin had others, more suggestive, as it seems to me, than those of his master. *Fors Clavigera* may thus be described, under one aspect of it, as a resumption, at the latter part of the century, of the contrast between *Past and Present* which Carlyle had drawn three decades before.[1] The background, against which Ruskin set his criticism, is the scheme of social economy, already expounded in his earlier books, and especially in *Unto this Last* and *Munera Pulveris*. It is unnecessary here to go in detail over ground which has already been mapped out in the Introduction to those books,[2] where, moreover, frequent references to *Fors* are supplied. It will, however, be serviceable, perhaps, to give here, as in the case of the miscellaneous contents of the book, a series of references to the principal places in which various of Ruskin's economic doctrines are expounded. The present pages, together with the Introduction to Vol. XVII., fulfil, I hope, a task which Ruskin suggested to another student of his works; namely, the compilation of "a general index of the important topics, *Fors* being the basis, and the other political economy books collaterally given":[3]—

*The "carnivorous" assumption:* criticism of the abstraction of the selfish motives as the basis of the current political economy: Letters 45, 62, 77,

[1] See Ruskin's own references to the book in Letter 10 (below, p. 179).
[2] Vol. XVII. pp. lxxxiii.–xcviii.
[3] See, in a later volume of this edition, the letter to the Rev. J. P. Faunthorpe of March 14, 1883.

78, 81 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 159, 516; Vol. XXIX. pp. 110, 134, 199). For this criticism in Ruskin's other economic books, see Vol. XVII. pp. lxxxiii., ciii.

*The definition of wealth and utility:* Letters 4, 37, 44, 70, 73, 90 (below, pp. 64–66; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 18, 126–128, 713–720; Vol. XXIX. pp. 14–16, 423–424). On these subjects, see Vol. XVII. pp. lxxxvi., lxxxviii., civ.

*"National Store" and National Debts:* Letters 1, 7, 22, 58, 67 (below, pp. 14, 121, 377; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 428, 639–641). Compare Vol. XVII. p. xc.

*Criticism of the theory of capital and interest* (under the figure of "the position of William" and otherwise): Letters 1, 5, 8, 11, 18, 32 (below, pp. 24–26, 90, 136, 187–190, 316–319, 600).

*Criticism of the theory of rent:* Letters 2, 43, 44, 78 (below, p. 80; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 108, 135–137; Vol. XXIX. p. 136).

*Criticism of the theory that "a demand for commodities is not a demand for labour":* Letter 2 (below, pp. 31–34). On this subject, compare Vol. XVII. p. xcvii.

*The theory of profit in exchange; the "heresy of the tables":* Letters 45, 82 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 159–160; Vol. XXIX. p. 225 *n.*). Compare Vol. XVII. p. xcvii. (8).

*The theory of exchange-value; the "Judaian heresy":* Letters 45, 70, 82 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 160, 717; Vol. XXIX. p. 225 *n.*). Compare Vol. XVII. p. lxxxix. (2).

*Money and currency:* Letters 44, 58, Appendix 11 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 134–135 *n.*, 429–430; Vol. XXIX. pp. 553–558). On these subjects, see Vol. XVII. pp. xc.–xcii.

*Denunciation of all interest as "usury":* Letters 21, 43, 44, 46, 53, 60, 66, 67, 68, 80, 81 (below, pp. 363–366; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 121–122, 139, 187, 335–338, 468–469, 624, 669–674; Vol. XXIX. pp. 179, 184–187, 199–200).

The last heading in the list covers, as will be seen, a great many passages in *Fors*. It marks a development of Ruskin's views on the subject, which may partly be traced in *Fors* itself. In *Munera Pulveris* he defined "usury" as "taking an exorbitant sum for the use of anything." Gradually, however, he was brought by his correspondent, Mr. Sillar, to accept the view that the taking of interest of any amount whatever should be denounced as usury.[1] He seems to have reached this conclusion with difficulty, and for a time was unwilling to

[1] See Vol. XVII. p. 220 and *n.*

press it with any great persistence.[1] But it more and more took hold of him, and in the later Letters he is in full tilt against the "usurers." He carried on the crusade in some separate Papers, which will be found in a later volume.

These economic and political criticisms are, it will have been noticed, scattered up and down the book. The Letters begin with some sort of continuous discussion of such problems, but the thread is soon broken, and the Letters become a casual criticism of the events of the time, in the course of which certain general propositions are suggested. To attempt in any abstract and concise form to summarise these main contents of the book would be idle. Ruskin himself began the task more than once, but abandoned it. He did, however, give several summaries of his main argument or principal contentions, and it may be useful to bring these summaries together.

The first summary is in Letter 22, where Ruskin states Eight Propositions as containing the gist of the earlier Letters; which propositions, summed yet more briefly, come to these—that the alleged prosperity of the country is non-existent; that it is time to begin accumulating a true National Store; that redemption from distress does not depend on Governments or Parliaments; that landlords should not be forcibly dispossessed, but that workmen should become landlords themselves and also capitalists; and that agricultural and technical schools should be established.

The next summary is in Letter 43, and is on a different plan. It is an account of the contents of the Letters as they stand, and it has been used in the abstracts now added at the beginning of Letters: but Ruskin proceeded no further than Letter 7; the abstract, he said, began itself to need further abstraction (Vol. XXVIII. p. 110). To what Ruskin thus did in Letter 43, the following notes of his may be added:—

> "The three numbers, 5th, 7th, and 9th, are the three explaining the laws of Hope, Charity, and Faith, or Hope, Love, and Admiration. The intermediate 6th is the exponent of Envy. The 8th is only the development of the 5th, showing the ground of our practical Hope. The 9th, of Faith, is summed in the words, 'They will know what it is to see the sky' (*cf.* 12, § 7).
>
> "Then the 10th and 11th are exponents of Injustice and Justice. The extreme of Injustice, passively sheathed sword in Park with a

[1] See, for instance, below, p. 363; and Vol. XXVIII. p. 121.

hook for collecting rent—his castle turned into a railway tunnel (*cf.* 9, §§ 8, 18).

"Letter XI. Justice—the great exponent of peasant producer and polite smooth-tongued pilferer—my limited and salutary portion of pease (§ 21). The Eleventh has the main inquiry why we fine people are to be fine, and labourers coarse, and the main challenge to Fawcett on his profits of idleness—followed out in 18, § 15."[1]

The next summary is in Letter 67, where Ruskin states sixteen aphorisms as containing "the gist of the book." These may in turn be summarised:—

(1) Forms of Government less important than the reality of the governors and obedience of the governed.

(2) The duties of Government are to provide (*a*) food, fuel, and clothes; and (*b*) education.

(3) Food, fuel, and clothes can only be got out of the ground or sea; every man must work for his living, or render equivalent benefit to life.

(4) The *mercenary* professions of preaching, lawgiving, and fighting to be abolished.

(5) Scholars, painters, and musicians to be maintained in limited numbers.

(6) Labour to be organised by the State; and most attention to be paid to the wants of the most necessitous.

(7) The State to provide the raw materials of labour.

(8) Food not to be imported in exchange for useless articles; the population which cannot be fed on the home-grown food to emigrate to colonies.

(9) All classes of the nation to work with their hands for their bread.

(10) Machinery driven by *steam* to be prohibited, except in some special cases.

(11) The speedy abolition of all abolishable filth, the first process of education.

(12) Education to be primarily moral.

(13) Moral Education begins with making a creature clean and obedient;

(14) And is summed when the creature has been made to do useful work with delight and thoroughly.

(15) Intellectual Education consists in giving the creature the faculties of admiration, hope, and love.

(16) The sum of intellectual education is the separation of what is inhuman in religious faith from what is human and eternally true.

[1] This eleventh Letter is said elsewhere to contain "the most pregnant pages in the entire series" (Vol. XXVIII. p. 644 *n.*).

In Letter 81, again, he summarises his message, as is noticed below (p. lxxxii. *n.*). Yet another summary is given by Ruskin in Letter 84. The "entire assertion made in *Fors*" is, he says, that the evils of the day arise from "the pillage of the labourer by the idler"; by the landlords, by the soldiers, lawyers, and priests. To this brief abstract of the evil a summary may be added from *Sesame and Lilies* of Ruskin's words of practical advice. In the Preface of 1871 to that book he refers to certain passages in it as containing "the best expression I have yet been able to put in words of what, so far as is within my power, I mean henceforward both to do myself, and to plead with all over whom I have any influence, to do also according to their means: the letters begun on the first day of this year, to the workmen of England, having the object of originating, if possible, this movement among them, in true alliance with whatever trustworthy element of help they can find in the higher classes."[1] The paragraphs in *Sesame* to which Ruskin here refers enjoins his readers to do all the wholesome work they can, and to spend all they can spare on doing all the good they can. What is certainly good is to feed people, to dress people, to lodge people, and, finally, to "please people, with arts, or sciences, or any other subject of thought." Interpret these injunctions widely, and you have in them a summary of the message delivered in *Fors Clavigera*.

These, then, are the main propositions of the book; this is the body of doctrine which serves as the background for Ruskin's criticism of the nineteenth century. But it is only a background. He proceeds not from generals to particulars, but from particulars to generals. The form of Letters into which he cast the book permitted him to deal with passing events, drawing or suggesting their moral, instead of dealing with abstract principles. He notes any incident, policy, or opinion of the day, as he found it in the papers or encountered it in his own experience, and relates it to some of his doctrines, or contrasts it with some past event or some better opinion. In one place he states, greatly daring, that he "never reads newspapers."[2] He picked and chose, no doubt; and one can believe that he never read the whole of a Parliamentary debate. But he was a persistent reader

[1] Vol. XVIII. p. 34. For the other reference, see *ibid.*, pp. 181–187.

[2] Letter 89, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 403). Ruskin's playful remarks were sometimes taken with strange literalness. In Grant-Duff's *Notes from a Diary, 1886–1888* (vol. i. p. 80) a story is told, on the authority of Sir George Trevelyan, that being met by a friend with the remark "Plevna has fallen," Ruskin said, "Plevna? I never heard of it. I know of nothing later than the fourteenth century." Sir George, who knew Ruskin, would of course have understood his quizzing way; but the

of the newspapers; he sometimes ruled off parallel columns to point a contrast;[1] and he collected a great number of cuttings from them—not always (unhappily for his editors!) recording their source correctly, if at all. The point of a large proportion of the remarks in *Fors Clavigera* must in large measure be lost upon a reader who does not recall the events of the day to which they refer; and as political memories are proverbially short, and as moreover many of Ruskin's allusions are in themselves somewhat obscure, explanatory notes and references have been supplied in this edition.

The general trend of events during the decade of *Fors* should also be borne in mind. The Letters began during the Franco-Prussian war. Before the second of them was issued, Paris had capitulated (January 30, 1871). The siege of Paris had brought misery and starvation in its train, and Ruskin was a member of the Mansion House Committee for its relief. The conclusion of peace between France and Germany was followed by the revolt of the Commune, and the second siege of Paris, by the Versailles troops, was in progress (March 18–May 21) while Ruskin was writing his Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Letters. Attention has been called in an earlier Introduction to Ruskin's French sympathies,[2] and to the mark which the war made on other of his books. In the case of *Fors Clavigera* the earlier Letters are full of allusions to it, and the pity and terror of those cruel months often recur to his mind at later times.[3] These events had a potent influence alike in healing his anger and quickening his compassion. They also, as he tells us, "broke up what little consistency of plan he had formed."[4]

The Franco-German war, with the destruction of property which it caused, gave a great impetus to British trade. These were years in which the revenue went up "by leaps and bounds," and politicians waxed enthusiastic over the "unexampled prosperity of the country." They were years also of a large Liberal majority in the House of Commons and of a Government full of reforming zeal. The reforms of Mr. Gladstone's first Administration, however salutary and needful

diarist cites the tale as an instance of Ruskin's aloofness. Ruskin followed the Eastern crisis closely (see next page). There is a similar story to the effect that Ruskin, being accosted by somebody with a remark upon Gordon and the Soudan, replied, "*Who* is the Soudan?" As a matter of fact Ruskin was deeply interested in General Gordon, and had called attention, in a letter to the public press, to some opinions of M. de Lesseps on the Soudan.

[1] See below, pp. 192–193.

[2] Vol. XVIII. pp. xxii.-xxiii.

[3] See, for instance, below, p. 41; Vol. XXVIII. p. 69; and Vol. XXIX. p. 187.

[4] Letter 22, § 17 (below, p. 382). Compare Letter 43, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 109).

they may have been, were for the most part political, rather than social. The sphere of Government "interference" was as yet restricted in social matters, and a powerful member of the Administration, Mr. Bright, was a representative of the Manchester school of "laissez-faire." The Education Act of 1870 is an exception; but its administration was still in the somewhat mechanical stage, stereotyped in Mr. Lowe's "Revised Code of 1861," which fixed the grants on a system of "payment by results"; that is, the State grant was determined by the results in the case of each individual child of an examination in reading, writing, and arithmetic. This system remained in force, with some modifications, until the Royal Commission of 1887 condemned it as "causing greater evils than it was intended to cure."

The play of parties and changes of government were not in the order of things which interested Ruskin, and one might read a good many numbers of *Fors Clavigera* without being made aware that Mr. Disraeli had succeeded Mr. Gladstone in 1874. Ruskin dealt with systems and ideas which were common to Ministers of both parties. A Chancellor of the Exchequer's standards of prosperity were subject equally to his criticism, whether the holder of the office was Mr. Lowe or Sir Stafford Northcote. But the chief characteristic of the Beaconsfield Administration—namely (in the phrase of the time), its "spirited foreign policy"—left its mark, in due turn, on Ruskin's book.[1]

During the years alike of spirited foreign policy by the Conservatives, and of domestic reform by their opponents, Ruskin was alive, more keenly and quickly than many professional politicians, to the real tendencies of the time. He warned them that an era of more imperious democracy was at hand.[2] He foretold the pressure that would compel radical alterations in the Land Laws.[3] He was insistent upon the Housing Question.[4] By a curious intuition he seems to have foreseen the Chinese Labour Question[5] which played so large a part in the General Election of 1905 and is at this moment (January 1907) agitating South Africa. The feature of the Election of 1905 which attracted most attention, and which seems likely to have the most marked effect upon the course of British legislation, was the accession of strength gained by the Labour Party. An

[1] See, for instance, Vol. XXIX. pp. 61, 375.
[2] See Letter 83, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 257–258).
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 273.
[4] See Letter 93, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 469).
[5] Letter 44, § 9 *n.* (Vol. XXVIII. p. 133).

inquisitive journalist issued a circular to the Labour members, inviting them to state the books which had most influenced them.[1] The author whose name figured more frequently than any other in the lists was Ruskin, though, where a particular book is mentioned, it is *Unto this Last*, and not *Fors Clavigera*. "I write to the labourers of England," he said in *Fors;* "but not of England in 1870–1878."[2] Let us hope that these readers of his, now so influential in the State, have assimilated the whole of his teaching. Let us hope that they are indeed the elect readers of the time for which he wrote, "when we shall have men resolute to do good work, and capable of reading and thinking while they rest; who will not expect to build like Athenians without knowing anything about the first king of Athens, nor like Christians without knowing anything about Christ: then they will find my letters useful, and read them."

To the foregoing retrospect of affairs in the State during the years of *Fors Clavigera*, a few words must be added about affairs in the Church. The most concise way of doing this is to take note of the titles to the chapters, dealing with this period, in the *Life of Archbishop Tait*. They are "The Athanasian Creed," "The Priest in Absolution," "The Public Worship Regulation Act," "Ritual Disputes," "The Burials Controversy," "Ritualism and Ecclesiastical Courts." There are specific allusions to some of these matters in the book;[3] and the absorption of so much of the energy of the Church in controversies which to Ruskin were fruitless and unworthy, explains the vials of wrath which he poured out upon the Bishops in many a page.

Such are the main currents in Church and State during the publication of *Fors Clavigera* which it is necessary to bear in mind in reading the book, because they colour Ruskin's reflections. But his criticism of the time has a scope at once wider and narrower—wider in its general scope, ranging over the whole field of national thought and conduct; narrower in its particular allusions, which are often to trivial, though it may be significant, doings and sayings of the moment. He sees one morning the completion of the British Indian Submarine cable hailed as a triumph of progress; but what, he wants to know, are the messages it conveys?[4] He finds his morning newspaper dilating upon

[1] See "The Labour Party and the Books that Helped to Make It," in the *Review of Reviews*, June 1906.
[2] Letter 36, § 2 (below, p. 669).
[3] See, for instance, Vol. XXIX. pp. 94, 403.
[4] Letter 5, § 8 (below, p. 85).

railroad enterprise; but is it any real advantage, he asks, that "every fool in Buxton can be at Bakewell in half-an-hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton?"[1] He is especially fond of taking hold of some evidence of unexampled prosperity, as it is estimated by Chancellors of the Exchequer, and contrasting it with pictures of domestic life as they are drawn in the courts of police-magistrates and coroners.[2] So, again, he will take some incident of travel which gives him a good instance of vacuity or vulgarity,[3] and contrast it with times of fuller life or persons of better sensibility. Or, once more, he fastens on some act or word of impiety to the good and beautiful,[4] and compares it with some gracious act or fine thought in the past. These are contrasts drawn somewhat in the style of his pictorial representation of Charles Keene's "Self-made man" side by side with a Greek Apollo.[5] Leslie Stephen has remarks in this connexion which seem to me just. Ruskin's criticisms will often strike the reader as undeserved or overdrawn. He practises "the art of saying stinging things, of which the essence is to make particular charges which we feel to be true, whilst we are convinced that the tacit generalisation is unfair."[6] His cases are not always, perhaps even not often, fair; but then, as Stephen adds in another essay, though his attacks on modern society might be caricatures, yet "clearly there were ugly things to caricature. Whether he bewailed the invasion of country solitudes by railways and the invasion of suburban villas, or the mean and narrow life of the dwellers in villas, or went further and produced hideous stories of gross brutality in the slums of London or Manchester, he had an unpleasant plausibility. If you tried to reply that such things were not unprecedented, you felt that the line of defence was rather mean, and that even if Ruskin was over-angry, you had no business to be too cool. When I read *Fors* I used always to fancy that I could confute him, and yet to feel uncomfortable that he might be essentially in the right. The evils which had stung so fine a nature to such wrath must at least be grievous."[7]

"I hold myself, and this book of mine," says Ruskin, "for nothing better than Morning, Noon, and Evening Advertisers of what things

[1] Below, p. 86.
[2] See, for instance, below, pp. 42, 431, 432, 667.
[3] See, for instance, below, pp. 161, 183, 345; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 39, 83, 300, 690.
[4] See, for instance, below, pp. 348, 349; and Vol. XXVIII. pp. 92 *seq.*
[5] See Plate IX. in Vol. XX. (p. 294).
[6] "Mr. Ruskin's Recent Writings," in *Fraser's Magazine*, June 1874, vol. 9 (new series), p. 695.
[7] "John Ruskin," in the *National Review*, April 1900, p. 249.

appear verily noteworthy in the midst of us."[1] Noteworthy occasionally for praise—as, for instance, a speech at the Manchester Chamber of Commerce on "the immorality of cheapness" and Samuel Plimsoll's protest against over-laden ships[2]—but more often for blame. He takes hold of the speeches of prominent politicians—of Mr. Lowe's on the paltriness of the battle of Marathon, or of Mr. Bright on adulteration, or Sir Mountstuart Grant-Duff on foreign policy, or of Sir Charles Adderley on the colonies,[3] and finds texts in them for attacks on the vulgarity, narrowness, or selfishness of a materialistic and money-grubbing age. Or, again, he fastens upon circulars, prospectuses, and newspaper articles, and exposes them as types of the stupidities of the age, for "it seems to be the appointed function of the nineteenth century to exhibit in all things the elect pattern of perfect Folly."[4] This is one of the senses of his "Nail-bearing" *Fors*. Thus a statement, in some circular or other, that over-production is the cause of distress is nailed down as "the negative acme of mortal stupidity."[5] The process of nailing down is often done with pitiless satire and unrestrained vehemence. "I perceive," he says, "that I live in the midst of a nation of thieves and murderers; that everybody around me is trying to rob every one else, and that not bravely and strongly, but in the most cowardly and loathsome way of lying trade; that 'Englishman' is now merely another word for blackleg and swindler; and English honour and courtesy, changed to the sneaking and the smiles of a whipped pedlar, an inarticulate Autolycus, with a steam hurdy-gurdy instead of a voice."[6] He proposes to prosecute a search for "men of truth, hating covetousness"—"naturally, in a Christian country, it will be difficult enough."[7] Speaking of foreign wars and domestic misery and sport, he puts it to us "whether it would not be more kind, and less expensive, to make the machinery a little smaller, by taking our sport in shooting babies instead of rabbits."[8] When most violent, he declares himself to be most restrained.[9]

Thus, then, *Fors Clavigera* is a book of prophecy in which a seer lashes the faults and follies of the age. Ruskin brought to this part of his work every resource of his literary art. In substance it is, as

[1] Letter 61, § 18 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 504).
[2] Vol. XXVIII. pp. 270, 394, 402.
[3] Below, pp. 102, 244, 627; Vol. XXVIII. p. 16.
[4] See, for instance, below, pp. 75, 235.
[5] Below, p. 81.
[6] Letter 58, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 426).
[7] Letter 62, § 5 (*ibid.*, p. 515).
[8] Letter 24, § 24, below, p. 436).
[9] See Vol. XXIX. pp. 197–198.

Mr. Harrison says, "a satire on our vices, ignorances, and vulgarities. In form it is a combination of badinage, raillery, irony, and invective."[1] What Mr. Harrison calls "a fantastic waggery in the phrasing" is not less conspicuous than the fierceness of its invective; and the two literary forms were expressions of a common purpose. He wears sometimes, he says, "the Harlequin's mask,"[2] but only to veil the grim intensity of his meaning. His tone is sometimes playful, but the play is stern —as stern, he says, as Morgiana's dance, in the *Arabian Nights*, around the robber chief, whom she amuses in order to conceal her poniard. Ruskin writes sometimes as if in jest, but "the apparent jest arises only from the frank opposition of his statements to ordinary impressions and ordinary practice."[3]

In two respects, however, *Fors Clavigera* is unlike other satires of the kind, and these are the respects which give to the book its distinctively Ruskinian character. The first is its combination of tenderness with irony. Ruskin's "fiercest imprecations die away," as Mr. Harrison has finely said, "into words as tender as those of Jesus when He wept at the sight of Jerusalem." The mingled strain of imprecation and compassion, of fierce invective and gentle grace, recalls the description which Ruskin gives of himself as sympathising at once, "in his enforced and accidental temper," with Swift, and "in his constant natural temper," with Marmontel.[4] And with the tenderness was united in Ruskin's work an element of active pity, of hopefulness, of constructive suggestion. Ruskin in very truth, as he once wrote to his father, was no misanthrope.[5] Through all his railing accusations he had still, as Leslie Stephen noted, "a power of conceiving Utopia which Swift would have considered worthy of the philosophers of Laputa."[6] The author of *Fors* and the Master of St. George's Guild might have said with William Blake:—

> "I will not cease from mental fight,
> Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
> Till we have built Jerusalem
> In England's green and pleasant land."

The ground of modern England reeked, for him, with a multitude of murdered men; its sacred places were defiled; and the tide before

[1] *John Ruskin*, in the "English Men of Letters" Series, p. 185.
[2] Letter 62, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 513–514).
[3] Vol. XXVIII. pp. 512, 650; Vol. XXIX. p. 197.
[4] Preface of 1871 to *Sesame and Lilies*, Vol. XVIII. p. 48.
[5] See the letter in Vol. XVII. p. xl.
[6] *Fraser's Magazine*, June 1874, N.S., vol. 9, p. 691.

his door was full of floating corpses.[1] Yet he looked ever backward and forward—backward in imagination to "a land of fruitful vales and pastoral mountains; and a heaven of pleasant sunshine and kindly rain; and a race of pure heart, iron sinew, splendid fame, and constant faith;"[2] forward, in hope and help, to golden days yet to return. "Over those fields of ours the winds of Heaven shall be pure; and, upon them, the work of men shall be done in honour and truth."[3] For—and these are the last words of Ruskin's book—"the story of Rosy Vale is not ended—surely out of its silence the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and round it the desert rejoice, and blossom as the rose!"

## (3)

The constructive side of Ruskin's criticism as developed in *Fors Clavigera* took two forms. One was the foundation of his Guild of St. George; the other was the explanation of a system of education, which in its turn was illustrated by various practical efforts and experiments.

The subject of the actual experiments made by Ruskin is reserved for the Introduction to a later Volume (XXX.), in which the various Circulars, Reports, Accounts, and Catalogues relating to the Guild and its Museum are collected. This practical work of the Guild, except in the case of the Museum, amounted to no great things; but it is necessary to remember, in reading *Fors Clavigera* and the subsequent history of the Guild, certain limitations and distinctions. Ruskin was neither so unpractical nor so visionary as people have sometimes supposed; he had a clear distinction in his mind between what was immediately practicable or desirable, and what was ideally best, although he did not always choose to label his pages as belonging to the one or the other order of ideas. A careful reader will easily distinguish between the author's wider appeal and "the narrow action of St. George's Guild for the present help of our British peasantry."[4] And, again, with regard to what was immediately practicable, he did not profess to be a political leader, setting out to found a colony or an

[1] *Letter* 8 (below, p. 133); Letter 72 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 757).
[2] *Letter* 45, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 153).
[3] *Vol.* XXVIII. p. 427.
[4] *Letter* 85, § 2 (Vol. XXIX. p. 316).

ideal community.[1] He hoped at the start that such leaders would arise at his call. When they failed him, he resolved, on some small scale to make a beginning and give an example of his own. But, all along, he was far more intent on laying down principles, than on carrying them out in detail; and when he writes of ideal conditions, as they figured themselves to his imagination, he was often amusing himself with Utopian dreams (as, for instance, in his proposals for a separate coinage) rather than drawing up codes for actual practice. He was legislating for his "island of Barataria," as he calls it elsewhere,[2] rather than for the actual estates of St. George's Guild.

The general principles which he laid down are clear enough. The only sound condition of society was, he held, one in which every man worked for his living; and of all forms of work, the healthiest and most certainly useful was work upon the land. This was "the main message of St. George."[3] So far, therefore, as St. George's Guild became operative at all, it was to be a land-owning company. The members of the company were to pursue their own avocations, banded together only by loyalty to the terms of St. George's vow. The labourers employed on the land of the Guild were to have fixed rents and decent conditions of life. The Guild was also to show, by schools and Museums, what should be done for the education of the labourer, whether in town or country. "To divert a little of the large current of English charity and justice from watching disease to guarding health, and from the punishment of crime to the reward of virtue; to establish, here and there, exercise grounds instead of hospitals, and training schools instead of penitentiaries"—such were the simple objects of the Guild; the scheme, as Ruskin adds, "is not, if you will slowly take it to heart, a frantic imagination."[4] The influence of his imagination is to be judged not merely by the success or failure of his own small experiments, but by the efforts of other individuals[5] and movements to which his teaching gave stimulus or suggestion.

Ruskin's ideas with regard to the ideal reconstruction of society at large have already been summarised in the Introduction to *Time and Tide*, where also some estimate has been attempted of the influence of those ideas upon the thought and practice of the time.[6] Here, again,

[1] See below, pp. 95, 96, 142, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 236.
[2] *A Joy for Ever*, § 65 (Vol. XVI. p. 59).
[3] Letter 93, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. p. 473).
[4] Letter 9, § 13 (below, p. 158).
[5] As, for instance, of his friend, the late Mr. C. H. Woodd: see Vol. XXVIII. p. 43 *n.*
[6] See Vol. XVII. pp. xcviii.–cii., cii.–cxii.

it is well to distinguish between suggestions for Utopia, between ultimate ideals, and general principles towards which each individual may contribute something of realisation. The principles upon which Ruskin laid most stress had relation to political systems, and to the duties of landlords, employers, and "bishops," respectively. In politics, he was a disciple of Plato. He sought to reconstruct society on the Platonic conception of Justice—assigning to each man his due place, and requiring from each man the fulfilment of his duties. To him, as to Plato, the health and happiness of all the citizens was the sole end of legislation, and the rule of the wisest was the surest method of securing it. To the landlords he said, The land is yours, only on condition that you hold it in trust for the rearing and tending of healthy and happy life. To the employers he said, Your business is to be "captains" of industry, trustees of the wealth you hold. To the workmen, "Do good work whether you live or die." To the State at large he said, Your political reforms, your "unexampled prosperity" are all meaningless and worthless so long as masses of your people are herded together in soul-destroying conditions of life. To the "bishops" he said, Yours is the duty of over-seeing the flock of Christ's people, and of preaching to the rich their duties to the poor. The forms into which Ruskin threw his reconstruction of society belong to the sphere of Utopian suggestion. The essential thing was the spirit which was to influence it and the end to which it was to be directed. This is what he means when he says that "it is no business of his to think about possibilities";[1] he was concerned only to lay down the principles which were essential to sound reform, in whatever form it might be embodied. For instance: in what he says, in the Letter already mentioned (p. xxvii.), about a "Doge of Sheffield" and his duties, the root of the matter is not in the title given to the appointed officer, but in the pleading for a quickened sense of obligation, on the part of the municipal authorities, to use their powers for the promotion of public health and the protection of the food of the people from impurity or adulteration. He did not expect any great or sudden changes. He knew perfectly well the interval that separates counsels of perfection from practicable reforms. We shall never see the realisation of Ruskin's Utopia; and yet each man may realise it for himself. For "the better Burg which shall be for ever" is "the City which is our own."[2] "Whether there really is or ever will be such a city is of no importance to him who desires to see it, for he

[1] Letter 67, § 20 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 656). Compare Vol. XXIX. p. 198.
[2] See Letter 82, § 35 (Vol. XXIX. p. 254), and the title of Letter 37.

will act according to the laws of that city and of no other."[1] The ideals of the wise and good are built

> "To music, therefore never built at all,
> And therefore built for ever."[2]

(4)

We pass now to a second aspect of Ruskin's constructive work; namely, his essay in educational reform. It was, as Mr. Hobson points out, essential to his rôle as a social reformer to have clear ideas on education of the young; "for what marks him off most distinctively from others is his repudiation of all mechanical or merely external methods of reform, and his insistence upon individual and social character as the means and the end."[3] Hence a discussion of the theory and practice of education becomes an essential part of *Fors Clavigera* as an essay in social reconstruction. There is perhaps no subject on which Ruskin has thrown out so many luminous and suggestive ideas as upon education, nor any field in which his teaching has been more helpful and fruitful. Not, indeed, that he claimed any originality here, or elsewhere; his only ambition was to recall to modern minds, and apply to modern conditions, the ancient wisdom of Plato and Xenophon; if he had read the works of the great educational reformers, such as Pestalozzi, Froebel, or Thring, he would have rejoiced to find many of his own suggestions anticipated or repeated by them; and so, too, it is interesting to note how often passages in Ruskin's writings forestall or unwittingly repeat the Reports of Matthew Arnold. Ruskin wrote not as a specialist, and seldom used technical terms; his thoughts on education, though most abundant in *Fors Clavigera*, are scattered in many of his earlier books; they form part of the texture of his work, and as such one cannot doubt that their influence has extended into circles untouched by technical treatises and Reports to "My Lords." In the following pages an attempt is made to bring his scattered contributions together and to direct the reader to them in some approach to a logical order.[4]

What, then, according to Ruskin is *the aim and scope of education?* We may begin with some words which Ruskin uses early in the book,

[1] Plato's *Republic*, quoted in Vol. XXVIII. p. 24.
[2] Tennyson, *Gareth and Lynette*.
[3] *John Ruskin, Social Reformer*, 1898, p. 233.
[4] I have found much help, in this section of the Introduction, in *Ruskin on Education*, by William Jolly (one of H.M. Inspectors of Schools), 1894.

and which are very characteristic of its style. The main purpose of education, he says, is "to see the sky." To see it, he explains, not with the astronomer's telescope, but with human eyes trained to love and reverence.[1] In other words, education is an ethical, rather than an intellectual, process. "You do not educate a man by telling him what he knew not, but by making him what he was not." "Education does not mean teaching people to know what they do not know. It means teaching them to behave as they do not behave."[2] "All education must be moral first; intellectual, secondarily. Intellectual education without moral is, in completeness, impossible; and in incompleteness, a calamity."[3] "The great leading error of modern times is the mistaking erudition for education. . . . The cry for education is a foolish and vain cry, if it be understood, as in the plurality of cases it is meant to be, for the expression of mere craving after knowledge, irrespective of the simple purposes of the life that now is and blessings of that which is to come. . . . Millions of peasants are at this moment better educated than most of those who call themselves gentlemen."[4] These are texts on which many pages of *Fors Clavigera* are based.[5]

It follows from the text that education is not to be estimated by mere acquisition of knowledge; and that *competitive examination* (for this and other reasons) is to be discouraged. Any stimulus given to "envious or anxious effort" is inimical to the true ends of education. Erudition is not education.[7] Ruskin's emphatic and repeated enunciation of these principles were a protest against the system of "payment by results" in the three R's—a system which of late years has for the most part been abolished in the Education Codes. The doom of the old theory and the vindication of Ruskin's protests were pronounced (so far as official regulation goes) when, in introducing the Education Budget of 1893, Mr. Acland discarded Mr. Lowe's views on education as "far too mechanical and inflexible," and said "our object is to consider not merely what the children know when they

[1] See below, pp. 164, 219, and Vol. XXIX. p. 58.

[2] *Munera Pulveris*, § 106 (Vol. XVII. p. 232); and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 144 (Vol. XVIII. p. 502).

[3] The twelfth of the Aphorisms in which Ruskin sums the gist of *Fors* and the substance of his past teaching (Vol. XXVIII. p. 655).

[4] *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii., Appendix 7 (Vol. XI. pp. 261, 263).

[5] See also (in a later volume of this edition) a letter in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, March 17, 1886.

[6] Letter 9, § 5 (below, p. 149); and see, among many other places, *A Joy for Ever*, § 135 (Vol. XVI. p. 121), and *Eagle's Nest*, § 177 (Vol. XXII. p. 243).

[7] *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. p. 261).

leave, but what they are, and what they are to do; bearing in mind that the great object is not merely knowledge, but character."[1]

Ruskin was led by these same principles to the paradox of opposing *the three R's*. His scholars, he said, were to be educated "not at all necessarily, in either arithmetic, writing, or reading."[2] Probably there are many people who know no more about Ruskin's views than this sentence. The newspapers, more ready to amuse than to instruct their readers, fastened on it, and made fun of the fact that, though "the workmen and labourers of Great Britain" were not to learn to read, they were expected to know Latin. Ruskin in his characteristic way protested that he meant what he said quite literally, and he tells us that he "wrote with some indignation" to the Companion of St. George who had ventured to promise instruction in the three R's.[3] What unquestionably he meant is that the three R's are not the "be all" and "end all" even of elementary education. At the time when he began to write *Fors* his paradox was very much needed, for by the English Education Code of 1870, and the Scottish of 1872, the three R's were the total of such education sanctioned and paid for by the State. Ruskin did not of course object to children being taught reading, writing, and arithmetic; but he maintained that there were other things more important, and that, if one branch of education or the other had to be omitted, he would in many cases prefer to see the three R's omitted. The true "compulsory education," he wrote in 1869, "is not teaching the youths of England the shapes of letters and the tricks of numbers, and then leaving them to turn their arithmetic to roguery and their literature to lust. It is, on the contrary, training them into the perfect exercise and kingly continence of their bodies and souls."[4] "Of all plagues that afflict mortality, the venom of a bad book to weak people and the charms of a foolish one to simple people, are," he wrote in 1886, "without question the deadliest; and they are so far from being redeemed by the too imperfect work of the best writers, that I never would wish to see a child taught to read at all, *when the other conditions of its education were alike gentle and judicious*."[5] The words which I have italicised show what he means. To be able to read, if you read nothing worth reading, is not to be educated; and a man though he can "only read

[1] July 31, 1893. See Hansard, 4th Series, vol. 15, p. 899.
[2] Letter 17, § 6 (below, p. 296).
[3] Letter 94, § 2 (Vol. XXIX. p. 479).
[4] *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 144 (Vol. XVIII. p. 502).
[5] A paper on "The Best Hundred Books," in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, February 23, 1886 (reprinted in a later volume of this edition).

with difficulty and write scarcely intelligibly" may yet be educated.[1] Also, he thought that the three R's were seldom taught in the right way, and he provided in his ideal schools "a children's library in which the scholars who care to read may learn that art."[2] What he sought to guard against was teaching children to read and then leaving them without guidance as to what and how to read. The perception of this danger has led to such movements as that of the "National Home Reading Union"; and it explains the importance which Ruskin attached in his Utopia to lists of selected books.[3]

From the proposition that education is to be an ethical process, another conclusion follows; namely, that *true education is not directed to "success in life."* "You do not learn that you may live, you live that you may learn." The true education "is, in itself, advancement in Life. . . . He only is advancing in life whose heart is getting softer, whose blood warmer, whose brain quicker, whose spirit is entering into Living Peace."[4] To like effect, Pestalozzi: "The ultimate end of education is, not perfection in the accomplishments of the school, but fitness for life";[5] and Lord Goschen, "Education is a means not of livelihood, but of life."[6]

How, then, is Education to fit us for life? "True education has respect, first, to the ends which are proposable to the man, or attainable by him; and, secondly, to the material of which the man is made. So far as it is able, it chooses the end according to the material . . . but the material is as various as the ends; every man is essentially different from every other."[7] Hence there can be no such thing as a general education equally applicable to everybody. *Education should be regulated by natural endowment.* True justice in education "consists in the granting to every human being due aid in the development of such faculties as he possesses for action and enjoyment."[8] This is the idea which underlies much of Ruskin's chapter on "Discovery" in *The Political Economy of Art*, and his suggestion of trial schools. Education can discover; it cannot create. The gold is a fixed quantity; "the best you can do with it is always

[1] Letter 4, § 2 (below, p. 61).
[2] Letter 94, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 484).
[3] Letters 57 and 58 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 407, 434).
[4] *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 145 (Vol. XVIII. p. 503); and *Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 2, 42 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 55, 100). On this subject, see a lecture ("In what sense ought Schools to prepare Boys and Girls for Life?") delivered by Professor M. E. Sadler before the Ruskin Society of Birmingham, December 13, 1899: *St. George*, vol. iii. pp. 97–113.
[5] Quoted by Mr. Jolly, p. 139.
[6] *On the Cultivation of the Imagination*, 1877, p. 5.
[7] *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii., Appendix 7 (Vol. XI. p. 262).
[8] Letter 9, § 3 (below, p. 148).

merely sifting, melting, hammering, purifying—never creating."[1] This is a principle on which Ruskin strongly insists in *Fors*. "The idea," he says, "of a general education which is to fit everybody to be Emperor of Russia . . . is the most entirely and directly diabolic of all the countless stupidities into which the British nation has been of late betrayed."[2] Ruskin maintained further, in opposition to the view of many conscientious teachers, that "you are to take most pains with the best material"; with the reminder, however, that "the cleverest boys often look very like the dull ones."[3] Ruskin's suggestions and injunctions with regard to education must all be read in subordination to this plea for adjusting the teaching to the capacity and circumstances of the scholar.

Yet there are some common elements in all education. Our education is to fit us for life; and the life of man consists of Work and Worship. First, then, *education must be directed to practical work*. "The first condition of education is being put to wholesome and useful work." "You don't know how to make a brick, a tile, or a pot; or how to build a dyke, or drive a stake that will stand. No more do I. Our education has to begin." "Do you think you can make a brick, or a tile? You rather think not? Well, . . . go and learn."[4] Ruskin meant all this very seriously. In his scheme of education not only would every child of the working classes be taught a trade, but the children of every class would be disciplined in some form of manual labour. This is one of the points at which Ruskin's educational theories touch most closely his social; for his ideas, which often seem to casual readers paradoxical and disconnected, were in fact closely interwoven. Passages enforcing the requirement of manual or technical instruction occur sometimes (as cited above) in connexion with educational matters, and at other times in his political discussions.[5] But apart from any schemes of social reconstruction, he held profoundly to the gospel of manual labour as a branch of education, both physical and mental — physical as conducing to health and strength, mental as bringing children into touch with realities and correcting the one-sidedness of verbal training. Hence his insistence upon the desirability of giving to physical exercises a useful, and not only a gymnastic, character. "I believe," he had written in

[1] Vol. XVI. p. 30.
[2] Letter 95 (Vol. XXIX. p. 495).
[3] Letter 9, § 4 (below, p. 148).
[4] Letters 2, § 15 (below, p. 39); 47, § 15, and 64, § 6 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 199, 566).
[5] See, for instance, Letter 86, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 341).

*Modern Painters*, "an immense gain in the bodily health and happiness of the upper classes would follow on their steadily endeavouring, however clumsily, to make the physical exertion they now necessarily take in amusements definitely serviceable."[1] And thus, in *Fors*, it is part of St. George's Vow to "labour with such strength and opportunity as God gives me, for my own daily bread"; and "any one may be a Companion of St. George who sincerely does what they can, to make themselves useful, and earn their daily bread by their own labour."[2] How Ruskin endeavoured to set in practice at Oxford what he preached, we have already seen in an earlier volume, where also reference has been made to some application of his principle in modern experiments in education.[3] Ruskin had social aims in view, as well as educational; but, on the educational side, the importance which he attached to manual labour is in accord with the precepts of all great educational reformers. "It was the central idea in Xenophon's education of Cyrus; in Fellenberg's celebrated institute at Hofwyl, in which education was united with and carried on through agriculture; in Pestalozzi's educational reforms; in Froebel's Kindergarten system, which is the intimate union of handwork and headwork. It has gained increased impulse in the new and growing extension of Manual Instruction; in the Sluyd system; and in the mixed, but notable, modern cry for technical education."[4]

In connexion partly with the importance which Ruskin thus attached to manual training, and partly in order to facilitate nature-lessons, he lays it down that every parish school should have "garden and cultivable land, spacious enough to employ the scholars in fine weather mostly out of doors."[5] In this point, as in many others, Ruskin was but a little in front of his time. In the existing Code, local education authorities are empowered to provide school-gardens;

[1] Vol. VII. p. 428.
[2] Vol. XXVIII. pp. 419, 645.
[3] Vol. XX. pp. xliv. xlv. Reference may also be made to a Paper on "Schoolboys as Navvies," by Mr. J. L. Paton, High Master of Manchester Grammar School, in *St. George*, January 1904, vol. vii. pp. 54–58, and to "Manual Training as an Element in a Liberal Education" (No. 2 of the "Occasional Papers" issued in connexion with Clayesmore School). "Shrewsbury, Sedburgh, and Bath College boys have all done navvy work," says Mr. Paton, "on their own playing fields, and now the Manchester boys are doing the same. Abbotsholme, Bedales, and Clayesmore, the A. B. C. of the reformed schools, make dovecotes, boathouses, and pavilions, fell trees, dig potatoes, cut and cart hay, dig out skating ponds, throw up rifle-butts, and erect bridges, to present as a gift of friendship to the Parish Council."
[4] Jolly, pp. 28-29.
[5] *Letter* 94, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 484).

and there is much in the "Memorandum on Courses of Work in Rural Evening Schools,"[1] recently issued (July 1906), which reads like a practical commentary upon Ruskin's Letters of a quarter of a century ago. The Board of Education dwells upon the importance of "definite training in manual operations"; points to the desirability of "farm schools, agricultural colleges, and courses in agriculture and horticulture"; advises "instruction in 'How to manage a garden'"; and commends "the increasing care which is being taken to connect the work of the public elementary schools with the surroundings of the scholars." I do not know that the Board has yet acted on the distinction which Ruskin draws between "agricultural schools inland and naval schools by the sea."[2]

Next, *education must be consciously directed to developing the faculties of Worship*, in the widest sense of that term. "We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love." Ruskin took Wordsworth's line for "literal guide in all education." Admiration, hope, and love are the three immaterial things which are essential to Life; and no day's schooling is complete which has not done something to develop a child's capacity for these things.[3]

The lines on which the education of children should proceed in this direction must depend on their several endowments; but *the elementary virtues should be a common element in all education.* "Habits of gentleness and justice," no less than "the calling by which he is to live," are to be taught to every child.[4] Ruskin was a firm believer in Carlyle's "Gospel of Soap and Water."[5] Moral education, he says, "begins in making the creature to be educated, clean"; and next, "obedient." "Religion means obedience." And these two virtues must be taught "thoroughly, and at any cost, and with any kind of compulsion rendered necessary by the nature of the animal."[6] Let us hope that the words in the Code of 1894, which echo Ruskin's injunctions, bear full fruit in the actual education of British children. "The managers and teachers will be expected to satisfy the Inspector that all reasonable care is taken to bring up the children in the habits of punctuality, of good manners and language, of cleanliness and neatness,

[1] "Evening" schools, it should be understood, is a technical term in official phraseology; the Government grants are equally applicable to "evening schools" which meet in the day-time.

[2] Letter 8, § 10 (below, p. 143).

[3] Below, pp. 90–91, 94, 156–157; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 255, 656.

[4] *Unto this Last*, Preface, § 6 (Vol. XVII. p. 21).

[5] *Friedrich*, book xiii. ch. xiii.

[6] Letters 67, § 19, and 45, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 655, 156).

and also to impress upon the children the importance of cheerful obedience to duty, of consideration and respect for others, and of honour and truthfulness in word and act" (§ 101). Other virtues which Ruskin desired to see made the subject of education were kindness and humility. He dwells especially on the importance of teaching "gentleness to all brute creatures";[1] and he took much interest in the child-society of "Friends to Living Creatures."[2] The teaching of Humility is the subject of some detailed notice in Letter 94,[3] which many schoolmasters and schoolmistresses would do well to read, mark, and learn.

How are "admiration, hope, and love" to be taught? "By *the study of beautiful Nature;* the sight and history of noble persons; and the setting forth of noble objects of action."[4] The words that I have italicised bring us to a very interesting point on which Ruskin is at one with the great educational writers of all ages. He agreed with Wordsworth's counsel, "Let Nature be your teacher." Mr. Jolly perhaps gives rather too mechanical a turn to Ruskin's theory in claiming him as an advocate of "open-air class-rooms." His view was rather that children should run wild as in a paddock, learning unconsciously (as Wordsworth says) "in sun and shower."[5] The ideal education was that of Joan of Arc, in the forests of Domremy.[6] "My own belief is," he says, "that the best study of all is the most beautiful; and that a quiet glade of forest, or the nook of a lake shore, are worth all the schools in Christendom, when once you are past the multiplication table."[7] Hence the destruction of beautiful scenery was to Ruskin the destruction of the best means of education.[8]

But, even if the conditions be favourable, the study of beautiful Nature cannot be wholly passive. To the *teaching of natural science* in elementary education, Ruskin devotes many pages in *Fors*—ridiculing the kind of information which to him seemed uneducational (that is, unsuitable in any scheme of general or elementary education), and, by way of sample lessons, indicating the kind of things which he would teach.[9] His three books on natural history—*Love's Meinie*,

[1] Letter 8, § 10 (below, p. 143).
[2] See the note to "The Doge's Daughter" in *Christ's Folk in the Apennine* (Vol. XXXII.).
[3] See Vol. XXIX. pp. 484–486.
[4] Letter 67 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 656).
[5] *Sesame and Lilies*, § 70 (Vol. XVIII. p. 124).
[6] *Sesame and Lilies*, § 82 (Vol. XVIII. p. 133).
[7] *A Joy for Ever*, § 105 (Vol. XVI. p. 90).
[8] See, for one typical passage, *Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 82–85 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 133–136).
[9] See, for instance, Letters 51 and 52, §§ 15–19 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 288 *seq.*, 304 *seq.*).

except the water, which needs the shine for the sake of transparency. So, in 1881, when he was working at the physical geology of the Coniston neighbourhood, he tried to make a model of the hills and dales, to see how the strike and dip of strata and faults and dykes in the rocks came out in relation to ups and downs, lake-basins and crags, and so forth. He found modelling too tedious to carry out himself, and, with characteristic oddness in his employment of means to ends, he set his gardener, the late Dawson Herdson, on the job. Herdson made a very fair general sketch in clay of the Old Man, and the main features as seen from the Coniston side; but he had not pegged out his distances, and when Dow Crag was built up into emphatic gloom, and Leverswater hollowed into depth, the smaller heights had no space left for them, and the effect was altogether too willow-patterned. Then Ruskin put another of his employés to work, and after much labour the model now in the Coniston Museum was evolved. This was intended to be photographed or engraved in a side-light, as one of a series of physical maps. Another was to have been of Savoy, for which Ruskin made the sketch here shown [the upper one on Plate A]. The black Lake of Geneva is dark blue in his drawing; the valleys are green, and the mountains roughly knocked in with lamp-black and Chinese white, tinted over with yellow for limestone, pink for Mont Blanc protogine, and red for gneiss. Rough as the sketch is, you see the structure of the Alps, and the lie of the land, at a glance. Towns, roads, and all the rest should be shown, he said, on separate plans."[1]

In the preparation of such plans, and of historical atlases, Ruskin believed in the introduction of graphic details. He liked the quaint productions of ancient cartographers, of which he had a collection, such as showed "the camels of the Tartar who dwells on the plains of Thibet"; or the Russian peasants along the banks of the Volga. "William Morris has shown in the illustrations of the Saga Library how maps may become picturesque designs, and this was much on the lines that Ruskin would have followed." He engraved in the *Bible of Amiens* a diagrammatic history of France—first giving only the mountain ranges and courses of the great rivers, and then, in a successive series, showing by means of roses, lilies, and other symbols, the main courses of historical development. "Worked out completely, an atlas of history on this plan might be as pretty as any picture-book. A child accustomed to such maps would have little trouble in remembering the outlines of national growth, and the whole tedious business of dates and uncouth names would be infinitely lightened."[2] Letter 95

[1] *Ruskin Relics*, pp. 115, 116.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

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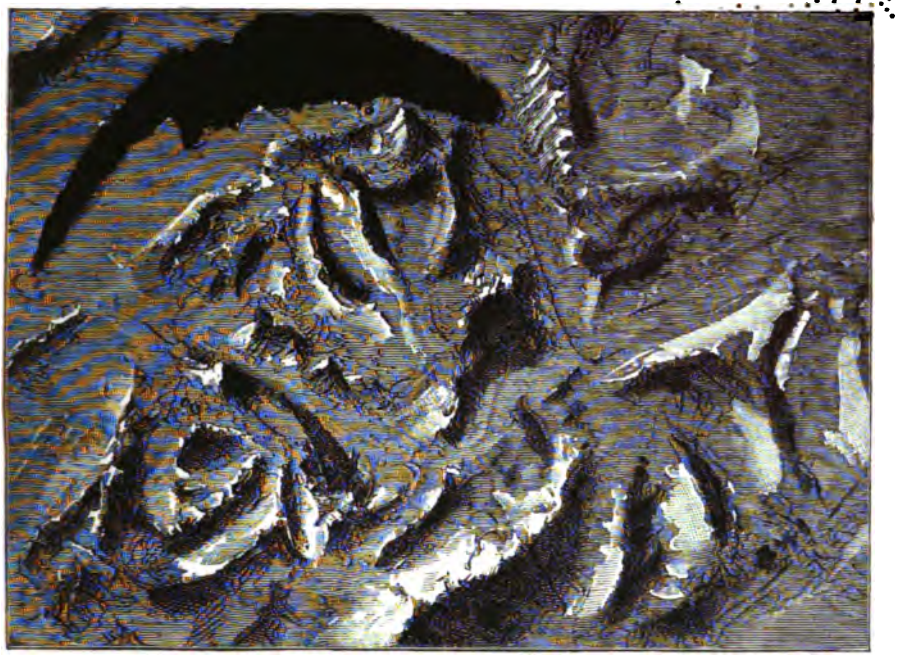

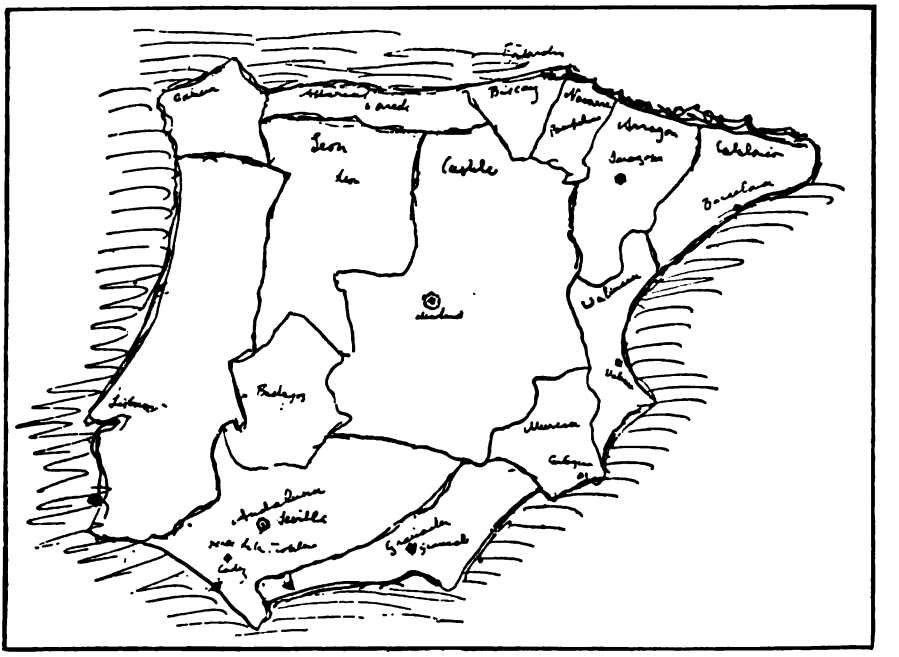

J. Ruskin

## Studies in Maps

**Physical Sketch of Savoy, and Outline Sketch of Spain**

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of *Fors* was written while Ruskin was preparing the plate for the *Bible of Amiens*, and he gives an amusing account of the kind of help which the ordinary school-atlas afforded him as a student of French history.[1]

Another subject to which Ruskin devoted much attention was the *teaching of music*. In the importance which he attached to music in education he was a loyal follower of Plato, and those who wish to read connectedly Ruskin's studies in this subject should turn first to the translations from Plato, with comments, which occupy Letters 82 and 83. Ruskin accepts his master's estimate of music as the prime element in moral education.[2] But, like Plato, Ruskin felt that just as music, rightly followed, might be the noblest, so, corrupted, it might be the most dissolute, of influences.[3] For good or for evil, the influence must always be great; but we do not always recognise "how much music, from the nurse's song to the military band and the lover's ballad, does really modify existing civilized life."[4] The purpose of noble music is, in Ruskin's definition, "to say a thing that you mean deeply, in the strongest and clearest possible way."[5] It is in music thus understood that Ruskin believed as an instrument of education, and of such music that he was thinking when he said, at the outset of *Fors*, "we will have music and poetry; the children shall learn to dance to it and sing it."[6] To three points, besides the selection of music with meaning in it, he attached chief importance. The voice was always to be principal; choral association was essential;[7] and beautiful words were always to be wedded to the song. Ruskin's detailed suggestions on these three points were given in separate books, subsidiary to *Fors Clavigera*—namely, *Rock Honeycomb* and *Elements of English Prosody* (Vol. XXXI.). In the Preface to the former he explained "the required method of musical teaching," dwelling especially on the propositions that "all perfectly rhythmic poetry is meant to be sung to music," and that "all entirely noble music is the illustration of noble words." The selection from Sir Philip Sidney's

[1] See Vol. XXIX. pp. 504–505.

[2] It may be noted, in passing, that he often finds modern applications for Plato's laws. Thus, in connexion with Plato's "choir of children," see what Ruskin suggests in *Rock Honeycomb* (Preface, § 2, Vol. XXXI.) about village choirs. For other notes on details of Platonic ideas adapted by Ruskin, see below, pp. 243, 671.

[3] Letter 82, § 15 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 234); and compare "The Relation of National Ethics to National Arts" (Vol. XIX. pp. 175–180).

[4] Letter 82, § 18 (Vol. XXIX. p. 239).

[5] Letter 9, § 12 (below, p. 157).

[6] Letter 5, § 21 (below, p. 96).

[7] See Letters 83, § 2, and 82, § 18 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 259, 239).

Psalter in the body of the book was given "for beginning of songs" to be thus sung. In the *Elements of English Prosody* Ruskin similarly interprets the measures, or metres, of poetry in terms of musical notation. Ruskin himself, it may be added, was in the habit of taking music-lessons throughout his life; he was a constant concert-goer; he had many friends among singers, and listening to vocal music was one of his keenest pleasures. He tried his hand occasionally at composition, and one or two pieces, which have found their way into print, are given in a later volume of this edition. He records in *Fors* some experiments he made in the Coniston village school, laying stress on bell-ringing;[1] very rightly, for in many villages this is the favourite, if not the only, form of music exercise. We have seen, too, in an earlier volume, how in the school at Winnington he arranged dances to words and tunes, sometimes of his own invention.[2]

The foregoing summary of Ruskin's essay in education is confined, for the most part, to what he says about elementary schools. We have seen in an earlier volume that he took much interest in middle class and University education.[3] This was outside the range of *Fors;* but it would be an imperfect and misleading summary of Ruskin's scheme of education, even for elementary schools, that ignored what he says, more explicitly elsewhere than in *Fors*, about the importance of *teaching in social and political economy*. This is indeed one of the distinguishing features of Ruskin as an educational reformer. More and more am I struck as volume succeeds volume in this complete edition of his Works with the discursiveness of his treatment and yet the solidarity of his thought. His discussion of educational theories and practice may conveniently be separated, as I have separated them in this Introduction, from his political criticisms; yet the two themes are essentially connected in the author's mind. His theory of education is advocated as that which is best calculated to develop the capacities of the individual, but it is also nicely adjusted to the requirements of individuals co-operating in a social organism. As Mr. Hobson well says,[4] to Ruskin the object of education is not to perfect the functions of the human being in order to the production of a prize specimen existing beautifully; it has ever the purpose of enabling each man to do his work well, so as to bring use and happiness both to himself and to others. "Moral education consists," he

[1] Letter 95 (Vol. XXIX. p. 500).
[2] Vol. XVIII. p. lxvii.
[3] Vol. XVI. pp. lxvii.–lxviii.
[4] *John Ruskin, Social Reformer*, p. 254.

says, "in making the creature practically serviceable to other creatures, according to the nature and extent of his own capacities; taking care that it be healthily developed in such service."[1] It follows from such a conception that social and political economy must be an element in every complete system of education. "Men's proper business in this world," says Ruskin, is "to know themselves and the existing state of things they have to do with; to be happy in themselves, and in the existing state of things; to mend themselves and the existing state of things, as far as either are marred or mendable."[2] Hence comes Ruskin's protest against the too rhetorical turn given to University education;[3] and hence his plea for the admission into all school curricula of "politics," by which he means "the science of the relations and duties of men to each other."[4] The protest and the plea are among the most deeply felt, and therefore the most eloquent, passages in his Works. Thirty or forty years after he thus wrote, official recognition was given to his ideas in the Code—again the work of a son of the first Trustee of St. George's Guild, Mr. Arthur Acland—which included courses in the Life and Duties of the Citizen in the grant-earning programme of Evening Continuation Schools.[5] In the sphere of Ruskin's Utopia his ideas were carried out by making a translation of Xenophon's *Economist* the first volume in the "Shepherd's Library."[6]

We are now, I think, in a position to recognise that the miscellaneous contents of the book, though "Fors" may have governed the order of their places, yet all serve a purpose in a designed whole. The readings in classical authors are given "in statement of necessary truth"—in confirmation or illustration of "things that are for ever true"—and in correction of passing follies or fallacies.[7] The readings in ancient and mediæval history are meant to illustrate, among other points, the comparative unimportance of forms of government. The studies of peasant life—of "such life, as in here and there a hollow of the rocks of Europe, just persons have sometimes lived, untracked by the hounds of war"[8]—are given in defence and illustration of his

[1] Letter 67 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 655).
[2] *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 71).
[3] In Appendix III. to *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. pp. 483–485).
[4] In Appendix 7 to *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. pp. 260–261).
[5] *Code of Regulations for Evening Continuation Schools*, 1894 (C.—7330). It is interesting to notice that in the detailed scheme suggested for the course, Ruskin's "tools to the man who can use them" is quoted (p. 16).
[6] See Letter 61 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 499).
[7] See Vol. XXIX. p. 227; below, pp. 250, 363; and Vol. XXVIII. p. 235.
[8] Letter 14, § 6 (below, p. 250).

Utopia. Passages of history and biography are introduced as suggestions of the way in which education should set forth noble objects of action.[1] And so throughout, the topics are introduced in "abrupt haste," yet in "true sequence."[2]

(5)

Another aspect of *Fors Clavigera* must now be considered, for besides being so much else it is also a Book of Personal Confessions. Besides those other and weightier matters, *Fors* contains, says Ruskin in one of his many summaries of the book, "much trivial and desultory talk by the way. Scattered up and down in it—perhaps by the Devil's sowing tares among the wheat—there is much casual expression of my own personal feelings and faith, together with bits of autobiography."[3] There are thus two sides to the personal aspect of *Fors*. It contains passages of formal autobiography relating to Ruskin's early years, and also informal self-revelation at the time when he was writing *Fors*.

The formal autobiography certainly stands in no need of the apology which, in the passage just cited, Ruskin goes on to give. The bits of autobiography "were allowed place," he says, "not without some notion of their being useful, but yet imprudently, and even incontinently, because I could not at the moment hold my tongue about what vexed or interested me, or returned soothingly to the memory." It was fortunate for English literature that Ruskin's childhood thus returned soothingly to his memory, while he was writing *Fors*, for out of the notes thus included grew one of the most charming of his books—the fragment of autobiography which he called *Præterita*. The autobiographical notes in *Fors* were included in *Præterita*, after revision and re-arrangement. A list in the Bibliographical Note (p. ciii.) enumerates the autobiographical passages of *Fors* in the order of their inclusion in that book; and when read in this order, the scattered passages in *Fors* will be found to give a fairly consecutive account of Ruskin's childhood. They were not, however, included on their own account. Like so many of the miscellaneous contents of the book, which seem at first disconnected, they fit in, and in several connexions, with its main topics. He began to give his recollections, in order to show the kind of education which had

[1] Vol. XXVIII. p. 656.
[2] Letter 75, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 61).
[3] Letter 88, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 384).

cultivated in him the habit of admiration.[1] His Notes on Scott were introduced with a similar intention, and they in turn led him to pursue his own recollections: he wished to show that in some respects his training had specially fitted him for understanding Scott's thoughts and temper.[2] His own education, again, and the comfort in which he was able to live, were used as a concrete illustration of the manner in which our social organisation works out in the sphere of distributive justice.[3]

Ruskin's charge against himself of some imprudence and incontinence in autobiographical talk has more relevance to the second of the personal sides in *Fors Clavigera*. "Weakly communicative," he calls himself in another place;[4] adding, in yet another Letter and superfluously, "I rather enjoy talking about myself, even in my follies."[5] He talked no less freely about his graces; giving testimonials to his kindness, and setting forth some (though by no means all) of his charities. There were reasons, and good ones, for such confessions in *Fors Clavigera*. He was setting himself up as a teacher and a leader; and "it is when the sentimentalist turns preacher of morals that we investigate his character, and are justified in so doing. He may express as many and as delicate shades of feeling as he likes—for this the sensibility of his organization perfectly fits him, no other person could do it so well, but the moment he undertakes to establish his feeling as a ground of conduct, we ask at once, "How far are his own life and deed in accordance with what he preaches? For every man feels instinctively that all the beautiful sentiments in the world count less than a single lovely action; and that while tenderness of feeling and susceptibility to generous emotions are accidents of temperament, goodness is an achievement of the will and a quality of the life. The only conclusive evidence of a man's sincerity is that he give *himself* for a principle."[6] Ruskin felt the force of what his friend, Lowell, says here, and this is the excuse which he made in an earlier book for "what taint of ungracefulness" might attach to his speaking about himself: whether people accused him of boasting or not, he thought it right to let them know that he practised what he preached.[7] As *Fors Clavigera* proceeded, and Ruskin was led into the position of leader in

[1] See Letter 10 (below, pp. 167, 168).
[2] On this subject, see Appendix 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 539).
[3] See Letters 4 (below, p. 63) and 56 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 392, 393).
[4] Letter 51, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 270).
[5] Letter 75, § 19 (Vol. XXIX. p. 74).
[6] *Among my Books*, 1870, p. 358.
[7] *Time and Tide*, § 115 (Vol. XVII. p. 412.)

was only paper-deep, and egotism is what fascinates readers in the best letters of all ages. Ruskin, when sitting down to pen chit-chat about himself, might have answered the objector in the words with which the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table defended the "trivial personalities," the "splashes and streaks of sentiment," which "you may see when I show you my heart's corolla as if it were a tulip":—"Pray, do not give yourself the trouble to fancy me an idiot whose conceit it is to treat himself as an exceptional being. It is because you are just like me that I talk and know you will listen. We are all splashed and streaked with sentiments—not with precisely the same tints, or in exactly the same patterns, but by the same hand and from the same palette." That there was an element of vanity in Ruskin he was too keen a critic of himself to deny;[1] but with regard to this, I am of the opinion expressed by an eminently sane critic with regard to one of Ruskin's favourite authors. "His vanity," says Mr. Birrell of Richardson, "afforded nobody anything but pleasure. The vanity of a distinguished man, if at the same time he happens to be a good man, is a quality so agreeable in its manifestations that to look for it and not to find it would be to miss a pleasure."[2] And nobody can read *Fors Clavigera* without perceiving that Ruskin was a good man.

(6)

In no other book does Ruskin confess so plainly as in *Fors Clavigera* the faith that was in him. I have spoken hitherto of its personal reminiscences, its side-lights upon the author's moods and temper, its intimate and sometimes trivial, pieces of self-revelation. But the book contains much more than these. It is in a deeper sense (to repeat Mr. Harrison's phrase) "Ruskin's Apocalypse." He himself regarded it as the end which crowned his work. He traces in one of the Letters the development and the harmony of the main teaching in his successive books; describing, through *Modern Painters*, the *Stones of Venice*, *Unto this Last*, and the Oxford *Lectures on Art*, "the message which, knowing no more as I unfolded the scroll of it, what next would be written there, than a blade of grass knows what the form of its fruit shall be, I have been led on year by year to speak, even to this its end."[3] *Fors Clavigera* was the end because

[1] See *Ariadne Florentina*, § 2 (Vol. XXII. p. 302.)
[2] *Res Judicatæ*, p. 33.
[3] Letter 78, § 14 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 137-138). Compare Letter 9, § 15 (below, p. 159).

it endeavoured to show the conditions under which alone great art (itself the product of the happy life of the workman) was possible; the conditions which are required in order that the Sun of Justice may shine upon "gracious laws of beauty and labour." And in thus crowning his work, Ruskin was led to expound, more definitely than elsewhere, the faith which inspired it. His beliefs changed; the texture, that is, which clothed his conceptions of the spiritual world, were subject to successive modifications. He traces some of them in *Fors*.[1] But the abiding substance of his faith is summed in the sonorous words of "St. George's Creed."[2] It proclaims the sacredness of Nature as the revelation of God, and the sacredness of Man as the interpreter of God in Nature. It teaches the service of man as the honour of God. And thus the final substance of Ruskin's practical message is summed up, as he indicates, in the passages in *Fors* from which the following extracts are taken:—

"The Law of God concerning man is, that if he acts as God's servant he shall be rewarded with such pleasure as no heart can conceive nor tongue tell."

"Bishops cannot take, much less give, account of men's souls unless they first take and give account of their bodies."

"Begin therefore to-day to do good work for Him, and see that every stroke of this work—be it weak or strong—shall therefore be done in lov of God and your neighbour and in hatred of covetousness."

"To your master Christ you must stand, with your best might; and in this manner only, self-asserting as you may think it, can you confess Him before men."

"You will find it needful to live, if it be with success, according to God's Law; and the first uttered article in it is, 'In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread.'"

"Every earthly good and possession will be given you, if you seek first the Kingdom of God and His Justice. If, in the assurance of Faith, you can ask and strive that such kingdom may be with you, though it is not meat and drink, but Justice, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost,—if, in the first terms I put to you for oath, you will do good work, whether you live or die, and so lie down at night, whether hungry or weary, at least in peace of heart and surety of honour;—then, you shall rejoice, in your native land, and on your nursing sea, in all fulness of temporal possession; —then, for you the earth shall bring forth her increase, and for you the floods clap their hands;—throughout your sacred pilgrimage, strangers here

[1] See Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 86 *seq.*).
[2] Letter 58 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 419).

first among them to the enlarged edition of *Sesame and Lilies* which he issued in June 1871, as the opening volume of a Revised Series of his Works. The statements which he issued with that volume are printed in Vol. XVIII. pp. 10, 11. The new system involved a breach with his old publisher, Mr. George Smith. At first Mr. Smith consented to act as agent concurrently with Mr. Allen; he continued to print *Fors* and other publications of Ruskin's until 1873; the name of his firm remained on the title-pages till that date, and he was the sole publisher of a new edition of *The Stones of Venice* issued in the same year. Ruskin's intention at first had been to apply the new method of publication only to his new books; and, in order to be quit of business worries, he was minded to sell outright to Mr. Smith the copyright of all his earlier works. There proved, however, to be a wide difference between the estimates which publisher and author respectively placed upon the value of the copyright, and by degrees Ruskin withdrew the whole of his books from Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.'s hands. The breach was not without regret on both sides. For no author had the firm published so many volumes as for Ruskin, and Mr. Smith had been for many years on the friendliest terms both with him and with his father. Ruskin, on his side, though convinced that he was in the right, and though he seems to have rather enjoyed crossing swords with him, yet says in *Fors* that he would "like much again to be on terms with my old publisher, and hear him telling me nice stories over our walnuts, this Christmas, after dividing his year's spoil with me in Christmas charity."[1]

Ruskin's experiment met with the usual reception of pioneer-work. Some further particulars about it are given in Volume XXX. Here it may be stated generally that the experiment went through the three stages of ridicule, modification, and general acceptance. Mr. Smith warned his old friend, more in sorrow than in anger, that the new plan would prove a melancholy failure. The booksellers, in whose interest Ruskin had conceived his plan, were bitterly opposed to it, and for some time there was a more or less general boycott of his books by the trade.[2] Ruskin published in *Fors* a sample or two of the

[1] Letter 72, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 757).

[2] The fact is worth noting in connexion with discussions now current (1907) in the book trade that the opposition to fixed prices came not in the first instance from Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., but from the booksellers. "Smith was not averse," says his biographer, "to making the experiment which Ruskin desired, but the booksellers did not welcome the new plan of sale, and the circulation of Ruskin's books declined" (*Dictionary of National Biography*, Supplement, vol. i. p. xl.).

kind of remonstrance he received.[1] But he held on firmly, and gradually Mr. Allen gathered together a large nucleus of customers. "The public has a very long nose," Ruskin once said, "and scents out what it wants, sooner or later."[2] Ruskin, meanwhile, was coming more and more, owing to the distribution of his inherited fortune, to depend for his livelihood upon the sale of his books, and in 1882 he agreed to a modification of his original plan. Instead of selling a book to the booksellers at a fixed price to which they were to add whatever sum they chose before selling it again to the public, he fixed the price at which it was sold to the public, giving the trade a fixed discount. Thus there was one uniform price, say 6s., at which customers everywhere could obtain the book. The discount given to the trade was not large enough to allow the booksellers to undersell each other, by offering the book at 5s. or 4s. 6d., but was sufficient to leave them "a living wage" for the cost and trouble of retailing. With this modification, Ruskin's experiment in publishing became a great success.[3] The publisher lived and throve, and the author received from his books a steady income, far in excess of his former receipts, and probably larger than that of any other didactic writer of the time.

Ruskin, it will thus be seen, was the pioneer of the system now commonly adopted under the phrase "the net book system." The "unpractical" visionary was proved to know the booksellers' business better than they knew it themselves. They ridiculed his plan and did all they could to strangle the new system in its infancy. The plan was initiated, as Ruskin said in 1871, "not in hostility to booksellers, but, as I think they will find eventually, with a just regard to their interest."[4] These words have been entirely fulfilled, for we read to-day that "the Net Book System was established eight years

[1] See Letters 14 (below, pp. 257–258) and 52 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 315). The following is a form of reply which Ruskin drew up (1871) for Mr. Allen to send to applications for free copies of *Fors*:—

> "In answer to your communication of date, I beg to state that I have no instructions from Mr. R. respecting the supply of any public institutions with his works; but *Fors Clavigera* and those of which the sale may in future be in my hands are not privately printed but are at any one's command. Mr. R. simply insists that they shall be paid for over the counter, and any bookseller may sell them, charging a fair extra profit."

[2] W. G. Collingwood, *Life and Work of John Ruskin*, p. 285 (1900 edition).

[3] Mr. Collingwood (*ibid.*, p. 295) records "the curious tribute once paid to Ruskin by the journal of a big modern shop (Compton House, Liverpool) as a 'great tradesman.'"

[4] Vol. XVIII. p. 10.

ago *at the earnest request of the booksellers themselves* to keep them out of the disastrous condition to which the under-cutting of prices among themselves had reduced their business."[1]

The "ways towards the bibliopolic world," described above, had some influence in retarding the sale of the earlier volumes of *Fors Clavigera;* but the book steadily, if gradually, made its way. He complains at one place in *Fors* of the comparatively slow sale of the book;[2] but already, in September 1871, he was able to report to Professor Norton that *Fors* "is beginning to make an impression."[3] For reasons sufficiently indicated in foregoing sections of this Introduction, it was much ridiculed in the public press, but it was not ignored. Ruskin's name probably figured more frequently in the newspapers during the continuance of *Fors* than at any previous period. If the book called forth derision in some quarters, it attracted to Ruskin devout disciples from others. As his work at Oxford caused him to be generally called in some circles "The Professor," so *Fors* and the St. George's Guild won for him in others the title of "The Master." It may be doubted whether this was altogether a gain. His correspondence was greatly increased,[4] to the serious detriment of other work, and the atmosphere of uncritical adulation, which increasingly surrounded him, was perhaps not without some effect in accentuating a tendency to absolutism and over-emphasis. These were characteristics which were confined to Ruskin as writer; in personal intercourse he remained to the end the most courteous and considerate of men.

By no one was the progress of *Fors* watched more sympathetically than by Carlyle. He saw what Ruskin was aiming at from the start, and the book had not proceeded far when he wrote the following letter to Ruskin:—

5 Cheyne Row, *30th April* 1871.

"Dear Ruskin,—This *Fors Clavigera* (No. 5), which I have just finished reading, is incomparable; a quasi-sacred consolation to me, which almost brings tears into my eyes! Every word of it is as if spoken, not out of my poor heart only, but out of the eternal skies; words winged with Empyrean wisdom, piercing as lightning—and which I really do not remember to have heard the like of. *Continue,* while you have such utterances

[1] *The "Times" and the Publishers,* printed for the Publishers' Association, 1906, p. 9. The italics are in the original.
[2] Letter 36, § 1 (below, p. 668).
[3] See, in a later volume of this edition, the letter of September 24, 1871.
[4] See below, pp. 280, 542.

in you, to give them voice. They will find and force entrance into human hearts, *whatever* the 'angle of incidence' may be; that is to say, whether, for the degraded and inhuman Blockheadism we, so-called 'men,' have mostly now become, you come in upon them at the broadside, at the top, or even at the bottom. Euge, Euge!

"Yours ever,

"T. CARLYLE."[1]

From the fourteenth Letter Carlyle made quotations in one of his own books;[2] and at the time when he had been reading the Letter, he wrote as follows, first to his brother (Dr. John Carlyle) and then to Emerson:—

"(*24th Feb.* 1872.)—I am reading Ruskin's books in these evenings. . . . I find a real spiritual comfort in the noble fire, wrath, and inexorability with which he smites upon all base things and wide-spread public delusions; and insists relentlessly on having the ideal aimed at everywhere; for the rest I do not find him wise—headlong rather, and I might even say weak. But there is nothing like him in England in these other respects."[3]

"(*2nd April* 1872.)—Do you read Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera*, which he cheerily tells me gets itself reprinted in America? If you don't, *do*, I advise you. Also his *Munera Pulveris*, Oxford-*Lectures* on Art, and whatever else he is now writing,—if you can manage to get them (which is difficult here, owing to the ways he has towards the bibliopolic world!). There is nothing going on among us as notable to me as those fierce lightning-bolts Ruskin is copiously and desperately pouring into the black world of Anarchy all around him. No other man in England that I meet has in him the divine rage against iniquity, falsity, and baseness that Ruskin has, and that every man ought to have. Unhappily he is not a strong man; one might say a weak man rather; and has not the least prudence of management; though if he can hold out for another fifteen years or so, he may produce, even in this way, a great effect. God grant it, say I."[4]

Subsequently, as we shall see in the next volume, Carlyle's enthusiasm for *Fors* cooled. Partly he found some of the later Letters less interesting, and partly perhaps he was concerned at the heightened temper which they revealed.

[1] Printed in W. G. Collingwood's *Life and Work of John Ruskin*, p. 288 (1900 edition).

[2] See below, p. 247 *n.*

[3] *New Letters of Thomas Carlyle*, edited by Alexander Carlyle, 1904, vol. ii. p. 284.

[4] *Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson*, 1883, vol. ii. p. 352.

It remains to give here some account of the text and manuscripts of *Fors Clavigera* generally, and of the illustrations in the present volume.

The *manuscript* of the book, as sent to the printers, is either very much dispersed or destroyed, and the editors have had access to some few portions only. These are as follow:—

Of Letters 1, 2, and 4 the first draft (much altered before publication) is in No. 2 of the "Oxford Ledgers," described in an earlier volume.[1] This also contains Letter 10, §§ 1–14. A page of the MS. of the first draft of Letter 1 is here given in *facsimile* (p. 12). A few passages from these first drafts are now given in footnotes.[2]

There remains at Brantwood a collection of manuscript material connected with the book. This includes a large part of the MS. of Letters 12 and 13 (for a *facsimile* of a page of Letter 12, see p. 204); the MS. of Letter 58, with the first draft also of St. George's Creed (facsimiled in Vol. XXVIII.); portions of the MS. of Letters 60, 61, 62, and 63; rejected drafts of portions of Letters 61, 64, and 66; a large part of the MS. of Letter 74; the complete MS. of Letter 84; a fair copy of nearly the whole of Letter 88, with rejected drafts of portions of it; the complete MS. of Letters 92 and 95 (with an additional passage, now given in Vol. XXIX. p. 497 *n.*).

Of Letter 91, the MS. was given by Ruskin to Miss Grace Allen. It shows very numerous revisions, of which a passage printed in Vol. XXIX. p. 448 *n.* gives an illustration. An examination of this, as of the other portions of the manuscript above mentioned, fully bears out what Ruskin says, in several places,[3] about the care which he bestowed in the composition of *Fors*.

The papers relating to *Fors*, which Ruskin preserved, contain (besides various newspaper cuttings and letters from correspondents, put into type and intended for the book) a large number of passages in Ruskin's hand, often carefully revised, which supplement or illustrate in a very interesting way the original text. Mr. Allen also had a certain amount of "over matter" in type which Ruskin instructed him to keep. A selection from this material has been made in the Appendix to the book (Vol. XXIX.).

[1] Vol. XX. p. xlix.
[2] See, for instance, below, pp. 34–35, 165–166.
[3] See especially Letter 82, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 227).

The *text* of *Fors Clavigera*, as printed hitherto, has often been far from correct. Full particulars of the somewhat complicated Bibliography of the book are given in the usual Note (p. xci.). The close examination of the text entailed in the discovery of these particulars has enabled the editors to make many corrections. Ruskin explains that "the misprints were atrocious."[1] An instance of a curious error, hitherto uncorrected, is noted beneath the text on p. 610. Ruskin left much of the task of press-correction to others,[2] and did not himself closely follow or check the successive issues of the several Letters. Mr. Allen possesses, however, a set of Letters 1–36 (with a duplicate set of Letters 1–12), which Ruskin read very closely, marking a large number of corrections. His corrections in Letters 1–12 have, by some oversight, not been made till now; most of the others (though not all) were made in the second edition, or later. Ruskin also gave to Mr. Wedderburn a complete copy of the book, containing several notes and corrections. This copy is the source of several minor corrections in the text, as also of numerous notes, now appended.[3] Particulars of the more important of these will be found in the Bibliographical Notes; many others are in matters of punctuation, which, though too small for separate notice, add a good deal to the easy intelligibility of the text. Other corrections were noted by Ruskin either in *Fors* itself, or in his two volumes of Index. All these are now embodied in the text of the book. Further corrections of a like kind[4] were made by Ruskin in a few of the Letters belonging to a set which he gave to Rawdon Brown, now in the Library of St. Mark at Venice.[5] Brown had enriched this copy with various cuttings and autograph letters from Ruskin. These have been utilised in the present edition,[6] which, it is believed, presents the text of *Fors* for the first time in a form at once complete and correct. The principal text is, in accordance with the rule of the edition, that which was last

[1] Vol. XXVIII. p. 94 *n*.
[2] Vol. XXVIII. p. 511.
[3] See, for instance, in this volume, pp. 19, 21, 96, 252, 291, 311, 424.
[4] See, for instance, Vol. XXVIII. p. 548 *n*.
[5] Rawdon Brown left many of his manuscripts and books (including a fine copy of the *Examples of Venetian Architecture*, with Ruskin's autograph inscription) to the Library of St. Mark, where they are thus inscribed:—

"Legato di Rawdon Brown Inglese alla Biblioteca di San Marco, che egli amò quanto la sua Venezia, ove morì in MDCCCLXXXIII."

A collection of Ruskin's letters to Brown is in the British Museum: see a later volume of this edition.
[6] See, for instance, Vol. XXVIII. p. 583.

revised by Ruskin. Passages, which appeared in editions earlier than such revision, are supplied in footnotes or in the Bibliographical Notes.[1]

The *illustrations* in the present volume comprise all those which appeared in the original issue of Letters 1–36, together with a few additional plates. Of the original illustrations, five were autotype reproductions of various vices and virtues painted by Giotto in the Arena Chapel at Padua (here Plates I.–V.). Those of the series not thus given by Ruskin in *Fors Clavigera* are included in this edition as illustrations to *Giotto and his Works in Padua.*[2] The other illustrations, given by Ruskin in *Fors* (here Plates VI., VII., IX., XI.–XIV.), are sufficiently described in the Contents and footnotes to the text. As elsewhere in this edition, photogravures are, as a rule, substituted for the less satisfactory autotypes of the original editions. In two cases, where the subjects lent themselves preferably to engraving, woodcuts have been substituted. This remark applies to Plate XIV., and to Fig. 8.

The additional plates introduced in this volume are four in number. The *frontispiece* is a photogravure from a photograph of Ruskin, taken in what may be called his middle *Fors* period. The "Studies in Maps" (Plate A) have already been referred to (pp. lxxi., lxxii.). Another new plate is a photogravure from the so-called "Theseus" in the British Museum (Plate X.)—a subject frequently referred to in the text. The third of the new plates is a chromo-lithograph of Carpaccio's "Dream of St. Ursula" (Plate VIII.)—a picture described in Letter 20. Ruskin made a small water-colour study of the picture, and from this he employed Mr. D. Gould to colour some photographs. These were for a time placed on sale by Ruskin through his publisher and agent. It is from the coloured photograph that the present chromo-lithograph has been reduced.

The illustrations in the text (other than Fig. 8) already mentioned are printed from the original wood blocks.

E. T. C.

[1] See, for instance, in this volume, p. 374. In one case, however, for reasons of typographical convenience, certain correspondence, which appeared in one edition only, is printed in the principal text (Vol. XXVIII. p. 396).

[2] Vol. XXIV., Plates XLI.–XLIII. (pp. 115, 120, 122).

[*Bibliographical Note.*—The Ninety-six Letters entitled *Fors Clavigera* have appeared in three different forms—(1) each Letter as a separate octavo pamphlet (in the case of the first thirty-six Letters, each with a separate pagination—an arrangement which was preserved even when the Letters were issued in volume form); (2) in eight volumes, each set of twelve Letters forming a volume; (3) in four crown 8vo volumes, with some curtailments and omissions.

It should be noted generally, with regard to the Ninety-six Letters, that, with the exception of Letters 90-96, they were originally published without names. Titles were not given to the Letters till July 1882 : see Letter 90, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 423).

The numbering of the sections (§§) is for the first time introduced in this edition.

## LETTERS 1–12, FORMING VOL. I. : 1871

The title-page to each Letter was as follows, the only changes being in the numbers of the Letters and the dates :—

> Fors Clavigera. | Letters | to the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain. | By John Ruskin, LL.D. | Letter the First. | January 1st, 1871. | [*Rose.*] | London : Printed for the author | by Smith, Elder & Co. 15, Waterloo Place; | and sold only by | Mr. G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent. | *Price Sevenpence.*

The dates on the title-pages are given in brackets below, after the words *First Edition*. On the reverse of the title-page was an "Advertisement." For the text of this, as originally printed, see below, p. 11 *n*.

In Letters 4–24, the following additional passages were inserted after the second paragraph of the "Advertisement" :—

> "Post-office orders, in advance, may be made payable to Mr. George Allen, Hayes, Beckenham, Kent.
>
> "If I keep my health, there will be a number for every month of the present year."

The latter of these two paragraphs was omitted in Letter 25 and later.

For another alteration in the wording after Letter 6, see, again, p. 11 *n*.

Each of the twelve Letters was issued in paper wrappers of a pale grey colour, with the title-page reproduced upon the front.

The imprints on the wrappers of the Second and later editions vary slightly, for in February 1873 Ruskin transferred the printing of *Fors Clavigera* from Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. to Messrs. Watson & Hazell (afterwards Messrs. Hazell, Watson & Viney); whilst in February 1874 Mr. George Allen changed his address from "Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent," to "Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent." As a general rule the wrappers

of later editions bear the words "Second," "Third," or "Fourth" Thousand or Edition on the front. When the Letters were furnished with names, these were printed on the wrapper and also as a heading to the Text, and the Letters were numbered "Letter the 1st" (etc.) instead of "Letter the First." It may be noted that the *first* edition of Letters 1 to 12 were exhausted before any of the volumes were made up with title-pages supplied by the publisher. Collectors may ask how first editions (often to be met with, bound up without title-pages or wrappers) can be distinguished. Diligent study of the following pages supplies the necessary material; but it may here be remarked summarily that after the first edition of Letters 1–20 (in the case of Letter 1, after the second), the pagination of each Letter was altered. After Letter 20 the title-page was omitted, and thus the first page of the text was p. 1 instead of p. 3.

The first edition of each Letter consisted of 1050 copies; later editions (except where otherwise stated), of 1000.

LETTER 1. *First Edition* (January 1, 1871).—Octavo, pp. 20; title-page, p. 1; "Advertisement" (see below, p. 11 *n.*), p. 2; text, pp. 3–20.

*Second Edition* (August 1872).—Octavo, pp. 20; collation as before. "Second Thousand" took the place of the date on the wrapper.

*Third Edition* (January 1878).—Pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn, and the "Advertisement" moved to p. 4 of the wrapper. "Third Thousand" on the wrapper.

*Fourth Edition* (March 1885).—Again pp. 18. By this time the Letter had received a title, which was printed both on the wrapper and as a heading to the text. "Fourth Thousand."

*Fifth Edition* (July 1894).—350 copies.

LETTER 2. *First Edition* (February 1, 1871).—Pages 23; title-page, p. 1; "Advertisement," p. 2; text, pp. 3–23.

*Second Edition* (May 1873).—Pages 21, the title-page being withdrawn, and the "Advertisement" moved to p. 4 of the wrapper. "Second Thousand" on the wrapper. Such indication of the edition was given in all cases, and will not be further mentioned in this Note.

*Third Edition* (April 1880).—Again pp. 21.

*Fourth Edition* (July 1886).—Again pp. 21. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 3. *First Edition* (March 1, 1871).—Pages 20; title-page, p. 1; "Advertisement," p. 2; text, pp. 3–20.

*Second Edition* (February 1874).—Pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

*Third Edition* (November 1880).—Again pp. 18.

*Fourth Edition* (October 1887).—Again pp. 18. The title of the Letter was now added. 900 copies.

LETTER 4. *First Edition* (April 1, 1871).—Pages 24; text, pp. 3–24.

*Second Edition* (February 1874).—Pages 22, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

*Third Edition* (November 1880).—Again pp. 22.

*Fourth Edition* (October 1887).—Again pp. 22. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 5. *First Edition* (May 1, 1871).—Pages 24; text, pp. 3–24.
*Second Edition* (January 1874).—Pages 22, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.
*Third Edition* (November 1880).—Again pp. 22.
*Fourth Edition* (March 1887).—Again pp. 22. The title of the Letter was now added.
Giotto "Hope" (Plate I. in this volume) was given, by autotype process, as a frontispiece to this Letter. In the first edition the plate was printed very dark, and the lines of Giotto's inscription were undiscernible. This was remedied in later editions by lighter printing from the same negative. In this volume the fresco is given in photogravure.

LETTER 6. *First Edition* (June 1, 1871).—Pages 21; text, pp. 3–21.
*Second Edition* (September 1874).—Pages 19, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.
*Third Edition* (April 1882).—Again pp. 19.
*Fourth Edition* (March 1888).—Again pp. 19. The title of the Letter was now added. 850 copies.
Giotto's "Envy" (Plate II. in this volume) was given, by autotype process, as a frontispiece to this Letter. In this volume the fresco is given in photogravure, and the plate is transferred to p. 111.

LETTER 7. *First Edition* (July 1, 1871).—Pages 24; text, pp. 3–24.
*Second Edition* (September 1874).—Pages 22, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.
*Third Edition* (November 1881).—Again pp. 22.
*Fourth Edition* (March 1888).—Again pp. 22. The title of the Letter was now added. 900 copies.
Giotto's "Charity" (Plate III. in this volume) was given, by autotype process, as frontispiece to this Letter.

LETTER 8. *First Edition* (August 1, 1871).—Pages 18; text, pp. 3–18.
*Second Edition* (September 1874).—Pages 16, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.
*Third Edition* (November 1883).—Again pp. 16. The title of the Letter was now added.
*Fourth Edition* (December 1888).—Again pp. 16. 850 copies.

LETTER 9. *First Edition* (September 1, 1871).—Pages 26; text, pp. 3–26.
*Second Edition* (October 1874).—Pages 24, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.
*Third Edition* (December 1882).—Again pp. 24. The title of the Letter was now added.
*Fourth Edition* (February 1889).—Again pp. 24. 850 copies.

LETTER 10. *First Edition* (October 2, 1871).—Pages 21; text, pp. 3–21.
*Second Edition* (September 1874).—Pages 19, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.
*Third Edition* (December 1882).—Again pp. 19. The title of the Letter was now added.
*Fourth Edition* (February 1889).—Again pp. 19. 850 copies.
Giotto's "Injustice" (now Plate IV.) was given, by autotype process, as frontispiece to this Letter.

LETTER 11. *First Edition* (November 1, 1871).—Pages 23; text, pp. 3–23.

*Second Edition* (October 1874).—Pages 22. The title-page was withdrawn, the text beginning on p. 1, but in the resetting the type was spaced out, the text thus extending to p. 22.

*Third Edition* (December 1882).—Again pp. 22. The title of the Letter was now added.

*Fourth Edition* (February 1889).—Again pp. 22. 850 copies.

Giotto's "Justice" (now Plate V.) was given, by autotype process, as frontispiece to this Letter.

LETTER 12. *First Edition* (December 23, 1871).—Pages 28; text, pp. 3–28.

*Second Edition* (October 1874).—Pages 26, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

*Third Edition* (December 1882).—Again pp. 26. The title of the Letter was now added.

*Fourth Edition* (February 1889).—Again pp. 26. 850 copies.

The editions of Letters 1–12, above described, are all that have been issued in octavo form, the editions of Volume I., next described, being made up from the separate Parts.

In the case of Volumes I. and III., and in that of Volume II. up to 1895, the volumes, as supplied by the publisher, were made up of the separate Letters. Title-pages for Volumes I.–III. were first supplied early in 1875. The publisher's imprint was an anachronism. It was given as "Orpington," with the dates 1871 (vol. i.), 1872 (vol. ii.), and 1873 (vol. iii.), though, as the title-pages of the separate Letters show, Mr. Allen was residing at Keston in those years. A copy of Volume I., obtained from the publisher in 1875, consisted of the second edition of each Letter (issued, severally, in 1872, 1873, and 1874), with a title-page bearing the date 1871; but of course sets of Volume I. exist, in which collectors bound up their first editions with the antedated title-page.

In July 1882 Title-pages and Contents (giving the titles of the several Letters) were issued for binding up with Volumes I.–VII. To give one sample, the Contents sheet for Volume I. was as follows:—

FORS CLAVIGERA

*FIRST SERIES*

CONTENTS OF VOL. I. (1871)


| LETTER | | LETTER | |
|---|---|---|---|
| I. | Looking Down from Ingleborough | VII. | Charities |
| II. | The Great Picnic | VIII. | Not as the World Gives |
| III. | Richard of England | IX. | Honour to whom Honour |
| IV. | Switches of Broom | X. | The Baron's Gate |
| V. | Whitethorn Blossom | XI. | The Abbot's Chapel |
| VI. | Elysian Fields | XII. | The Prince's Lesson |


The Titles and Contents of Volumes I.–VII. were issued in July 1882, at the price of sixpence. On the completion of the work in December 1884,

the Titles and Contents of the eight volumes were sold at the same price.

Up to 1882, volumes were sold by the publisher in fancy bindings only. In July 1882 they were issued in mottled-grey paper boards, with white paper labels on the back, lettered "Ruskin. | Fors Clavigera. | Vol. I. [II., etc]." Volumes I.–III. were published at 7s. each; later volumes at 10s. each.

The title-page, as first issued in 1875 (with the date, however, "1871"), is as given here on p. 3. The last issued title-page is:—

> Fors Clavigera. | Letters | To the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain, | By John Ruskin, LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow of Corpus | Christi College, Oxford. | Vol. I. | *Sixth Edition.* | [*Rose.*] | George Allen, | Orpington and London. | 1895.

The sheet of contents followed. No imprint. Issued in green cloth, lettered on the back, "Ruskin | Fors | Clavigera | Vol. I. | 1871." Price 7s. Medium 8vo. This edition is still current.

## LETTERS 13–24, FORMING VOL. II.: 1872

The title-page to each Letter was as follows, the only changes being in the numbers of the Letters and the dates:—

> Fors Clavigera. | Letters | to the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain. | By John Ruskin, LL.D. | Letter the Thirteenth. | January 1st, 1872. | [*Rose.*] | London: Printed for the author | by Smith, Elder & Co., 15, Waterloo Place; | and sold only by | Mr. G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent. | *Price Sevenpence.*

The dates on the title-pages are given in brackets below, after the words *First Edition.*

Each of the Letters was issued in wrappers of a pale grey colour. In Letters 13–20 the title-page was reproduced upon the front of the wrapper. In Letter 21, and in all the others of the series (21–96), no title-page was given; the title appearing upon the front of the wrapper only, while the "Advertisement" was transferred to p. 4 of the wrapper.

The first edition of the Letters again consisted of 1050 copies; later editions (except where otherwise stated), of 1000.

LETTER 13. *First Edition* (January 1, 1872).—Pages 20; text, pp. 3–20.
*Second Edition* (June 1875).—Pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn.
*Third Edition* (January 1884).—Again pp. 18. The title of the Letter was now added.
*Fourth Edition* (October 1895).—Again pp. 18. 100 copies, printed at the same time as Letters 13–24 in volume form.

LETTER 14. *First Edition* (February 1, 1872).—Pages 22+2 unnumbered pages; text of Letter, pp. 3–22; "Notes and Correspondence" ("Advice" to Works Series and Correspondence with Messrs. Parker and Co.) on the unnumbered pages.
*Second Edition* (July 1875).—Pages 20+1 unnumbered page. The

title-page was withdrawn, the "Advice" was revised (as in the present text, see p. 257), and the correspondence with Messrs. Parker was withdrawn.

*Third Edition* (January 1884).—Again pages 20+1. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 15. *First Edition* (March 1, 1872).—Pages 23+1 unnumbered; text, pp. 3–23; "Notes and Correspondence" on the unnumbered page.

*Second Edition* (January 1876).—Pages 23. The title-page being withdrawn and the "Advertisement" transferred to p. 4 of the wrapper, the text of the Letter occupied pp. 1–21, and the "Notes and Correspondence" (now leaded out), pp. 22, 23.

*Third Edition* (January 1884).—Again pp. 23. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 16. *First Edition* (April 1, 1872).—Pages 20; text, pp. 3–20.

*Second Edition* (December 1875).—Pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

*Third Edition* (January 1884).—Again pp. 18. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 17. *First Edition* (May 1, 1872).—Pages 20; text, pp. 3–20.

*Second Edition* (February 1876).—Pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

*Third Edition* (January 1884).—Again pp. 18. The title of the Letter was now added.

*Fourth Edition* (October 1895).—Again pp. 18. 75 copies, printed at the same time as Letters 13–24 in volume form.

With this Letter was issued a frontispiece (autotype process) of "Robert, Count of Flanders" (now Plate VI.). Ruskin writes on one of his sets (now in Mr. Allen's possession), "Two 17th Letters kept for states of plate." It may be noted that in ed. 1 the plate has a pale green tint lithographed over it; in later editions the tint is a pale cream. In this volume the plate (*photogravure*) is transferred to p. 297.

LETTER 18. *First Edition* (June 1, 1872).—Pages 20; text, pp. 3–20.

*Second Edition* (May 1876).—Pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn.

*Third Edition* (January 1884).—Again pp. 18. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 19. *First Edition* (July 1, 1872).—Pages 18 (text of the Letter, pp. 3–18), followed by one unnumbered page of "Notes and Correspondence."

*Second Edition* (May 1876).—Pages 16+1 unnumbered, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

*Third Edition* (January 1884).—Again pp. 16+1. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 20. *First Edition* (August 1, 1872).—Pages 24; text of Letter, pp. 3–22; "Notes and Correspondence," pp. 23, 24.

*Second Edition* (February 1876).—Pages 22, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

*Third Edition* (November 1883).—Again pp. 22. The title of the Letter was now added.

*Fourth Edition* (June 1892).—Again pp. 22. 250 copies.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (autotype process), of "The Chapel of St. Mary of the Thorn" (now Plate VII.). The plate in ed. 2 is printed in a browner tone than in ed. 1, and does not show the details so well; in later 8vo editions the printing was again lighter. In this volume the plate (*photogravure*) is transferred to p. 349.

Letter 21. *First Edition* (September 2, 1872).—In this and the subsequent Letters no title-page was given in the first edition, and the "Advertisement" was placed on p. 4 of the wrapper. There is, therefore, from Letter 21 onward, no difference in pagination (with some exceptions) between the first and succeeding editions. Pages 24.

*Second Edition* (March 1876).

*Third Edition* (January 1884).—Title of the Letter added.

Letter 22. *First Edition* (October 4, 1872).—Pages 28.

*Second Edition* (May 1876).

*Third Edition* (January 1884).—Title of the Letter added.

*Fourth Edition* (October 1895).—75 copies, printed at the same time as Letters 13–24 in volume form.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (woodcut) of "The Mount of Compassion" (now Plate IX.).

Letter 23. *First Edition* (November 1, 1872).—Pages 26.

*Second Edition* (July 1876).

*Third Edition* (January 1884).—Title of the Letter added.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (autotype) of "Theseus." For this volume the design has been cut on wood, and placed as Fig. 8 on p. 404.

Letter 24. *First Edition* (December 2, 1872).—Pages 28; text of Letter, pp. 1–24; "Notes and Correspondence," pp. 25–28.

*Second Edition* (March 1876).—Pages 27, the "Notes and Correspondence" being more closely set.

*Third Edition* (January 1884).—Again pp. 27. Title of the Letter added.

*Fourth Edition* (October 1895).—Again pp. 27. 75 copies, printed at the same time as Letters 13–24 in volume form.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (autotype) of Luini's "We have seen His star in the East" (now Plate XI.). In ed. 1 the plate was printed in a warm red tint; in later issues, it was greyer. In this volume the lettering has been corrected (see p. 434 *n.*).

Letters 13–24 were next printed in volume form. The remarks on Volume I. apply also to this volume; but in October 1895 the Letters 13–24 were all reprinted at one time (the loose Parts being exhausted) and in one volume. As in most cases there had been only three editions of these Letters in separate form, the volume comprising them all was called "Fourth Edition" on the title-page. The publisher's imprint is "George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, | and | 156 Charing Cross Road, London, | 1895. | [*All rights reserved.*]. On the back of p. 27 of Letter 24 is the imprint, "Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson and Co. | Edinburgh and London." 500 copies. Price 7s. This edition is still current.

## LETTERS 25–36, FORMING VOL. III.: 1873

The title-page (that is, the title on the front of the wrapper) to Letters 25 and 26 was as follows:—

> Fors Clavigera. | Letters | To the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain. | By John Ruskin, LL.D. | Letter the Twenty-Fifth (Twenty-Sixth). | January 1873 (February 1873). | [*Rose.*] | London: Printed for the Author | by Smith, Elder & Co., 15 Waterloo Place; | and sold only by | Mr. G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent. | *Price Sevenpence.*

Ruskin after this date removed the printing of *Fors* from Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., and the titles of Letter 27 bore a different imprint, thus:—

> "London: Printed for the Author by | Watson and Hazell, London & Aylesbury; | and sold only by | Mr. George Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent. | *Price Sevenpence.*"

Letters 31–36, "And sold by" ("only" being omitted).

Each of the Letters was issued in wrappers of a pale grey colour, except Letter 28, which was issued in salmon-coloured wrappers

Each edition of the Letters consisted (except where otherwise stated) of 1000 copies.

LETTER 25. *First Edition* (January 1873).—Pages 32. 1050 copies.

In this Letter, and succeeding ones, the following paragraph, which had been inserted in the "Advertisement" in Letter 4 and onwards, was omitted: "If I keep my health, there will be a number for every month of the present year." Issued about the middle of the month: see § 1 (p. 447).

*Second Edition* (July 1876).

*Third Edition* (March 1885). — The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 26. *First Edition* (February 1873).—Pages 20. 1050 copies.

*Second Edition* (August 1876).

*Third Edition* (March 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 27. *First Edition* (March 1873).—Pages 24; text of the Letter, pp. 1–19; p. 20, blank; "Notes and Correspondence," pp. 21–24. 1050 copies.

*Second Edition* (May 1876).—Text, pp. 1–20; "Notes and Correspondence," pp. 21–24.

*Third Edition* (March 1885).—Text, etc., as in ed. 2. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 28. *First Edition* (April 1, 1873).—Pages 27; text of the Letter, pp. 1–19; p. 20, blank; "Notes and Correspondence," pp. 21–27. This Letter was issued in salmon-coloured paper wrappers.

*Second Edition* (December 1876).—Text, pp. 1-20; "Notes and Correspondence," pp. 21–27.

*Third Edition* (March 1885).—Text, etc., as in ed. 2. The title of the Letter was now added.

*Fourth Edition* (January 1900).—Text, etc., as in eds. 2 and 3. 50 copies, printed at the same time as Letters 25–36 in volume form.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (autotype) of "The Tale of Adriane" (now Plate XII.). In this volume the plate (*photogravure*) has been transferred to p. 510.

LETTER 29. *First Edition* (May 1, 1873).—Pages 28.
*Second Edition* (September 1876).
*Third Edition* (March 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 30. *First Edition* (June 2, 1873).—Pages 23.
*Second Edition* (February 1877).
*Third Edition* (March 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 31. *First Edition* (July 1, 1873).—Pages 28.
*Second Edition* (May 1876).
*Third Edition* (March 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (autotype) of "Walter of the Border-land" (now Plate XIII.). In this volume the drawing (by Chantrey) has been reproduced by photogravure.

LETTER 32. *First Edition* (August 1, 1873).—Pages 29.
*Second Edition* (February 1877).
*Third Edition* (March 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 33. *First Edition* (September 1, 1873).—Pages 24.
*Second Edition* (February 1877).
*Third Edition* (May 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 34. *First Edition* (October 1, 1873).—Pages 32.
*Second Edition* (September 1876).
*Third Edition* (October 1884).—The title of the Letter was now added.

With this Letter a frontispiece (autotype) was issued of "Sunday Playthings" (now Plate XIV.). The plate in eds. 2 and 3 is different from that in ed. 1; the background in the later editions being rough instead of smooth, and the shadow being on the right of the coins instead of on the left. For this volume the designs have been cut on wood, and the plate is transferred to p. 633.

LETTER 35. *First Edition* (November 1, 1873).—Pages 31.
*Second Edition* (April 1877).
*Third Edition* (July 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 36. *First Edition* (December 1, 1873).—Pages 14, followed by an unnumbered leaf containing on its front (reverse blank) an "Advice"

and List of Subscriptions (see here p. 678). This edition contained a slip, which reads as follows :—

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE.

"MR. ALLEN begs respectfully to give notice to Subscribers, that on and after January 1st, 1874, all communications must be addressed—

"Mr. George Allen,
"Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent."

*Second Edition* (February 1877).
*Third Edition* (May 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

Letters 25–36 were next issued in volume form. Up to 1900, copies of this volume were supplied, as described under Volume I., but in that year Letters 25–36 were all reprinted in a volume. This was called "Fifth Edition" on the title-page. Publisher's imprint as in vol. ii. (with date 1900); printer's imprint (as in vol. ii.) on the reverse of the title-page. 400 copies. Price 7s. This edition is still current.

## SMALL EDITION IN FOUR VOLUMES

This is a curtailed edition of the whole ninety-six Letters in four volumes, first issued in 1896. Its scope is explained in the following "Advice to the New Edition" by its editor, Mr. W. G. Collingwood :—

### ADVICE

TO THE NEW EDITION

"THIS edition of *Fors* is published for the use of readers who are content to have Mr. Ruskin's own Letters without those of his correspondents.

"By omitting from the appendices of the former issue everything except such passages as are necessary to explain the text, the eight large volumes are now reduced to four of a handy size, uniform with the cheap edition of the Works Series.

"All the illustrations are given; the full-page photographs reproduced as tint blocks from the original negatives; and a new index is added to each of the volumes.

"W. G. C."

The curtailments were somewhat more extensive than this "Advice" indicates: see below.

The new Index to each volume was compiled by Mr. W. G. Collingwood. In his Indexes he occasionally added Notes and Translations; these are, for the most part, incorporated in the present edition: see, *e.g.*, in this volume, pp. 504, 601, 626; and in Vol. XXVIII., pp. 115, 591.

As the volumes of the "Small Edition" do not coincide in their contents with the volumes of the present edition, it will be convenient to give in this place the bibliographical particulars of the whole of it, and not only of such portions (viz., vol. i. and part of vol. ii.) as are included in the present volume. The notice of curtailments, on the other hand, will be more conveniently given in each volume of the present edition.

The autotype illustrations of the octavo editions were in the Small Edition reproduced by half-tone process.

Each volume was published at 6s., the price being reduced in January 1904 to 5s.

The Small Edition was electrotyped, and no changes have been made in successive issues of it, other than the substitution of title-pages with altered dates.

VOLUME I. (containing Letters 1–24).—The title-page is as follows:—

> Fors Clavigera | Letters | To the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain | by | John Ruskin, D.C.L., LL.D. | New Edition | Vol. I. | Containing Letters I.–XXIV. | [*Rose*] | George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington | and | 156, Charing Cross Road, London | 1896 | [*All rights reserved*].

Small crown 8vo, pp. viii. + 524. Half-title, with blank reverse, pp. i., ii.; title-page (with imprint at foot of reverse—"Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co. | At the Ballantyne Press"), pp. iii., iv.; "Advice" (see above), with blank reverse, pp. v., vi.; Contents, pp. vii.–viii.; List of Illustrations, p. viii.; text of Letters, pp. 1–504; Index, pp. 505–524 (imprint repeated at foot of p. 524).

*First Edition* issued in April 1896, in green cloth, uniform with the other "small editions," lettered on the back, "Ruskin | Fors | Clavigera | Vol I. | Letters I.–XXIV. | George Allen." 3000 copies.

*Reprinted* in January 1899 (1000 copies), with "Second Small Edition" on title-page; and in January 1902 (1000 copies), "Third Small Edition."

VOLUME II. (containing Letters 25–48).—The title-page is the same as that of Volume I., except for "Vol. II. | Containing Letters XXV.–XLVIII."

Small crown 8vo, pp. vi. + 517. Half-title, with blank reverse, pp. i., ii.; title-page (with imprint as before), pp. iii., iv.; Contents, pp. v., vi.; List of Illustrations, p. vi.; text of Letters, pp. 1–498; Index, pp. 499–517 (imprint repeated at foot of reverse of p. 517).

*First Edition* issued in June 1896, bound as before. 3000 copies.

*Reprinted* in July 1900 ("Second Small Edition": 1000 copies). And again in December 1906 ("Third Small Edition": 500 copies).

VOLUME III. (containing Letters 49–72).—The title-page is the same as that of Volume I., except for "Vol. III. | Containing Letters XLIX.–LXXII."

Small crown 8vo, pp. vi. + 480. Arrangement of pp. i.–vi. as in Vol. II. Text, pp. 1–460; Index, pp. 461–480. Imprint as before.

*First Edition* issued in October 1896, bound as before. 3000 copies.

*Reprinted* in January 1902 ("Second Small Edition": 1000 copies).

VOLUME IV. (containing Letters 73–96).—The title-page is the same as in Volume III., except for the description of the volume: "Vol. IV. | (Terminal) | Containing Letters LXXIII.–XCVI."

Small crown 8vo, pp. vi. + 530. Arrangement of pp. i.–vi. as in Vol. II. Text, pp. 1–507; Index, pp. 509–530.

*First Edition* issued in December 1896, bound as before. 3000 copies.

*Reprinted* in July 1902 ("Second Small Edition": 1000 copies).

The curtailments, etc., made in Letters 1–36 (in addition to the omission of the whole of "Notes and Correspondence" from Letters 14, 15, 20, 21, 24, 27, 28, 30) are the following:—

*Letter 5*, § 17, footnote omitted.

*Letter 8*, §§ 1, 3, footnotes omitted.

Letter 10, § 19, p. 180 (of this edition), lines 4–10, the passage "There was an article . . . mud-walks of literature" omitted.

Letter 14, § 3, footnote, the passage "In the more elaborate . . . to the public?" omitted.

Letter 16, § 3, footnote omitted.

Letter 21, § 2, line 1, the text is altered to "The first is in a letter from a workman."

Letter 22, the "Notes and Correspondence" are omitted, except that § 26 is printed as a footnote to Letter 21, § 18.

Letter 25. Here the "Notes and Correspondence" are given, but the passage (§ 24) "I was greatly pleased . . . Her Majesty's Service" is omitted.

Letter 29. Here, again, the "Notes and Correspondence" are given, but the passage (§ 14) "As the circulation . . . I have said" is omitted.

Letter 30, § 6, the passage "This unlucky index . . . necessity" is omitted.

Letter 31, § 7 *n.*, "Dinlay;—where" is altered to "Dinlay; in Liddesdale."

Letter 32. The "Notes and Correspondence" are omitted, except that two lines of Dr. John Brown's letter are printed as a note to Letter 31, § 1, line 22.

Letter 33, § 10, the passage "Respecting . . . sentimental proceedings" is omitted; § 10, the footnote is omitted. The "Notes and Correspondence" are given, with the omission of the first few lines ("I have . . . meantime").

Letter 34, §§ 11–17, the whole of this passage (though Ruskin's) is omitted. The "Notes and Correspondence" are omitted, except that the letter to young girls (§ 20) is given.

Letter 35, § 11, footnote omitted; §§ 12–15, the whole of this passage (again Ruskin's) is omitted. The "Notes and Correspondence" are omitted, except that a few lines are printed as a note to § 4.

Letter 36. The "Notes and Correspondence" are omitted, except that a few lines are printed as a note to § 11.

## POCKET EDITION

This edition, issued in 1906, is printed from the electrotype plates of the Small Edition, above described. The only alteration in the text, other than new title-pages, is the substitution for the editor's "Advice" of the following "Publisher's Note":—

> "In this Edition of *Fors Clavigera* the 'Notes and Correspondence' of the Original Editions are omitted, but Mr. Ruskin's own letters are given in full."

This latter statement is not quite accurate (see curtailments noted above).

Volume I. The title-page has the following text (surrounded by a floral border): "Fors Clavigera | Letters I. to XXIV. | By | John Ruskin | London: George Allen." On the reverse of the title-page is the rose device and (at the foot) "February 1906 | All rights reserved." The title-pages in Volumes II.–IV. are the same, excepting for the numbers of the Letters.

Issued on February 9, 1906, uniform with the other volumes in the Pocket Edition (see Vol. XV. p. 6). 4000 copies.

VOLUME II. Issued on March 9, 1906. 4000 copies.

VOLUME III. Issued on April 6, 1906. 4000 copies.

VOLUME IV. Issued on May 9, 1906. 4000 copies.

The price of each volume was 3s. Still current.

## INDEXES TO "FORS CLAVIGERA"

These, as hitherto published, are of two kinds (not counting the new indexes made by Mr. Collingwood for the "Small Edition")—(1) by Ruskin himself, extending, however, only to Letters 1–48; (2) to the whole work, by Mr. Fauntherpe and various assistants.

For Biographical Note, see Vol. XXIX., where Ruskin's Indexes to Letters 1–24 and 25–48 are combined, with additional entries (mainly from his Notes) completing the work.

## PASSAGES OF "FORS" USED IN "PRÆTERITA"

The following list, referred to in the Introduction (p. lxxvi.), enumerates the autobiographical notes *in Fors* in the order in which they were incorporated (with revisions) in *Præterita*:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Letter 10, §§ 2–8 | (*Præterita*, i. ch. i. §§ 1–7). |
| „ 46, §§ 2–6 | ( „ „ „ §§ 8–12). |
| „ 51, §§ 2–7 | ( „ „ „ §§ 13–18). |
| „ 52, §§ 1–5 | ( „ „ „ §§ 19–23). |
| „ 56, §§ 3–9 | ( „ „ „ §§ 24–30). |
| „ 28, § 15 | ( „ „ „ § 31). |
| „ 56, §§ 10–12 | ( „ „ „ §§ 32–34). |
| „ 54, §§ 3–11 | ( „ „ ch. ii. §§ 36–45). |
| „ 53, § 1 | (not repeated in *Præterita*). |
| „ 53, §§ 2, 3 | (*Præterita*, i. ch. ii. § 46). |
| „ 33, § 13 | ( „ „ „ § 47). |
| „ 42, § 12 | ( „ „ „ § 48). |
| „ 54, §§ 13–19 | ( „ „ „ §§ 48–54). |
| „ 63, §§ 11, 12 | ( „ „ ch. iii. §§ 69–70). |
| „ 63, § 13 | (not repeated in *Præterita*). |
| „ 63, § 14 | (*Præterita*, i. ch. iii. § 70). |
| „ 65, §§ 17–19 | ( „ „ „ §§ 71–73). |

## SELECTIONS FROM "FORS CLAVIGERA"

In 1899 a volume of selections was issued, the object of which was explained in the following "Preface":—

"THIS series of passages from *Fors Clavigera* has been compiled with the aim of opening its message to all sorts and conditions of men for whom it may be practically inaccessible by reason of its difficulty, length, and costliness. The workers here addressed, and many genuine students of the master, are often poor,

unleisured, unlettered. They are the 'little ones' of wisdom; they have not won strength to overcome, patience to endure, power to rule fortune, like the three *Fors* heroes.[1]

"And those readers also within whose reach the whole book lies, may, like myself, find much advantage in having its essential and permanent elements sifted, separated, and summed up, and so made to stand out in stronger relief. If ever selection is to be justified, surely it is here. The ninety-six Letters cover a period of thirteen years (1871–1884), and deal with an immense range of subjects and interests; they were written in many places and many moods, sometimes under severest strain, and composed in a style which holds the solid purpose of the author, as it were, in solution, while they are still further complicated by the practical experiment in which he sought to embody his scheme of social reform. It is a literature rather than a book, the 'Confessions' of a man of genius as well as 'Letters to Workmen.' All these strange characteristics constitute its rare quality and charm for lovers of literature and of the master, but we cannot afford to relegate this unique work to the curious in things literary or the undiscriminating 'Ruskinian.' The influence of Ruskin's life and work culminates in his social teaching, and of that teaching *Fors Clavigera* is the crown and climax. It completes his development from the art-critic to the critic of life, drawing to a focus his radiant wisdom and the Christ-like love of men, which

'White of heat, awakes to flame.'

Without it the student cannot thoroughly grasp his system, nor perceive the unity underlying his life, thought, and conduct. And above all, this—the last of his five chief works, as he himself counts them[2]—is indispensable for the workers and the thinkers, those who are in travail for that new birth of society of which it is at once a prophecy and a sign.

"I have tried to set aside everything except the directly ethical or social teaching, to keep on the whole to principles, avoiding applications and illustrations; the story of St. George's Company, and much besides of deep interest or beauty, is therefore passed over. But this little volume does not claim to represent the cream of the bowl; its purpose will best be fulfilled if the nature of its contents—fragmentary, though 'more golden than gold'—should make the reader go seek for himself in the treasury out of which they have been collected.

"CAROLINE A. WURTZBURG.

"SCARBOROUGH, *July* 1899."

The title-page of the volume was as follows:—

Readings | in | John Ruskin's | Fors Clavigera | 1871–1884 | George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington | and | 156, Charing Cross Road, London | 1899 | [*All rights reserved*].

Foolscap 8vo, pp. x. + 200. Half-title (with blank reverse), pp. i., ii.; title-page (with imprint at the foot of the reverse—"Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson and Co. | At the Ballantyne Press"), pp. iii., iv.; Preface (as above), pp. v., vi.; Contents, pp. vii., viii.; "The St. George's Creed" (from Letter 58, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 419), pp. ix., x. Text, pp. 1–198; Index, pp. 199, 200 (with imprint repeated at foot of p. 200). The Selections are classified under four "Sections"—Preliminary, Ethic, Economic, and Didactic. Each of these sections has a fly-title with contents on the reverse.

The following is a list (taken from the Index) of the extracts included;

[1] The reference is to Hercules, Theseus, and Lycurgus: Letter 2, § 2 (below, pp. 28, 29).

[2] See Letter 78, § 14 (Vol. XXIX. p. 137).

the numbers immediately following each item are those of the Letters of *Fors Clavigera* quoted from :—


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**Issued, December 6, 1899, in green cloth boards, lettered on the back, "Ruskin | Readings | in | Fors | Clavigera." 2000 copies. Price 2s. 6d.**
***Reprinted*** **in July 1902 ("Third Thousand").**

## TRANSLATIONS

***Fors Clavigera,*** **as a whole, has not been translated into any foreign language.**

**Numerous passages from it are translated into *German* in the following books, edited and arranged, by Jakob Feis:—**

***Wege zur Kunst, I.—Eine Gedankenlese aus den Werken des John Ruskin. Strassburg, J. H. Ed. Heitz (Heitz und Mündel).*** **This book is now in a second edition.**

***Wie wir arbeiten und wirthschaften müssen.—Eine Gedankenlese aus den Werken des John Ruskin.*** **(Same publishers.) Also in a second edition.**

***Aphorismen zur Lebensweisheit.—Eine Gedankenlese aus den Werken des John Ruskin.*** **(Same publishers.) Also in a second edition.**

**Some passages are translated into *Italian* in a work entitled *Venezia* (Florence, 1901), already described: see Vol. XXIV. p. 198. The greater part of Letter 26 will be found at pp. 65–73; and of Letter 71 at pp. 272–277.**

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**There has been no authorised *American edition* of *Fors Clavigera.* Unauthorised editions are numerous.**

## REVIEWS (1871–1873)

***Fors Clavigera,*** **as already explained (above, p. lxxxiii.), was for a time widely sent by Ruskin to the newspapers, and notices of the Letters in the public press (daily, weekly, and monthly) were very frequent. It would be as impracticable, as unprofitable, to collect them all. The following is**

a list of some notices of Letters 1–36 (for reviews of the later Letters, see Vols. XXVIII. and XXIX.):—

*Saturday Review*, January 7, 1871, vol. 31, pp. 13, 14 ("Mr. Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera*").

*Liverpool Daily Courier*, February 9, 1871 (referred to by Ruskin in Letter 4, p. 67).

*Times*, May 8 and December 25, 1871 (extracts from Letters 5 and 12, headed "A New Arcadia").

*Liverpool Daily Post*, June 9, 1871 (referred to in Letters 6, 7, pp. 106, 118).

*Daily News*, August 3, 1871.

*Republican*, August 19, 1871.

*Spectator*, October 7, 1871, vol. 44, pp. 1202–1204 ("Mr. Ruskin's 'Violent Toryism'").

*Glasgow Herald*, 1872 (referred to in Letter 15, p. 276).

*Daily News*, May 2, 1873 (referred to in Letter 30, p. 560).

*Christian World*, June 6, 1873 ("Mr. Ruskin's Eccentricities").

For some Italian press notices of Letter 19, see p. 328 *n*.

## PUBLICATIONS SUPPLEMENTARY TO, OR CIRCULATED WITH, "FORS CLAVIGERA"

### Photographs

Mr. William Ward's list contained for many years the following items:—

*The Four Lesson Photographs*

(See *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 59, 64, 66, 69, 77, 78)

Madonna, by Filippo Lippi (2s. 6d.).
The Etruscan Leucothea (1s. 6d.).
Madonna, by Titian (3s. 6d.).
Infanta Margaret, by Velasquez (3s. 6d.).

*On Fly-leaf, for binding with "Fors Clavigera"*
(See Letters 63 and 78)

Holbein's Introduction to the "Dance of Death" (1s.).
Athena (woodcut) (6d.).
A Kingfisher (see Letter 65), from a drawing by Professor Ruskin (1s.).
Also several Italian Photographs.

### Pamphlets and Circulars

The following is a list of pamphlets, etc., distributed with *Fors Clavigera*, with Ruskin's sanction:—

*Society Classified.* By E. D. Girdlestone, B.A. Pages 12. Published by Charles Robbins, Weston-super-Mare. 1876. Price One Penny. [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 555.]

*Thoughts on Luxury and Poverty.* By E. D. Girdlestone, B.A. Pages 10. Published by Charles Robbins, Weston-super-Mare. 1876. Price One Penny. [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 575.]

*Our Misdirected Labour.* By E. D. Girdlestone, B.A. Pages 16. Published by Charles Robbins, Weston-super-Mare; Hamilton, Adams & Co., London. 1876. Price One Penny. [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 606.]

*Water for Manchester from Thirlmere.* By R. Somervell. Pages 16. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co. [1877.] Price One Penny.
*Thirlmere Defence Association.* A leaflet of four pages.
*Thirlmere Defence Fund.* One quarto page.
*John Wesley and Usury.* Reprint of Correspondence in *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, July and August, 1876. Pages 29. Sunderland: B. Williams. 1877. (See Letter 71, Vol. XXVIII. p. 751.)
*Abstract of the Objects and Constitution of St. George's Guild.* This circular (printed in Vol. XXX.) was issued with Letter 86.

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*Variæ Lectiones.*—The following are the variations (other than those already described) between the text of the different editions of Letters 1–36.

With regard to the present edition, it should be remembered that the numbering of the paragraphs in the text is now for the first time introduced. The system of references throughout the book is, therefore, changed. The trifling alterations in the text thus occasioned are, as a rule, not included in the following list.

It should further be noted that differences in setting have been introduced, for the sake both of uniformity and of space, in the present edition. Thus, in the text of the Letters, extracts are, as a rule, now set in smaller type: Ruskin's own practice in this matter varied. Where, however, he gave special reasons for large type, it has been retained. In the text of the "Notes and Correspondence," communications by correspondents are now set in a type smaller than that given to Ruskin's own remarks.

Of other variations, the more important are given under the text, and to these a reference only is here supplied. Minor matters of punctuation, spelling, etc., are not, as a rule, enumerated, but they are occasionally given (as aids to the identification of various editions):—

Letter 1, at the end, ed. 1 adds "My next letter, I hope, on 1st February." § 10, line 5, "gentlemen" is misprinted "gentleman" in ed. 3.

Letter 2, § 13, line 8, "previous" is here substituted for the number of the page in other editions.

Letter 3, § 6, line 11, "at all" was misprinted "to all" in ed. 3. § 15, line 8, ed. 1 read ". . . fighting for them, by mere spade . . ."

Letter 4, § 10, last line, "of August" was misprinted "in August" in eds. 1 and 2. § 11, line 14, "then" is here inserted according to the corrections in the author's copy. § 12, line 18, "as to" is similarly corrected for "and" (a misprint in all previous editions).

Letter 5. Ruskin in his copy makes the title "The White-thorn Blossom" (adding "The"). § 7, line 1, "Botanical" is similarly omitted before "lecturer," and line 3, "only Leaves" altered to "only—gladdened Leaves"; line 22, the word "rightly" is inserted before "seen" in accordance with the author's note in his Index to vols. i. and ii. (see p. 85 *n.*). § 10, line 4, ed. 1 reads correctly "spin and weave"; later editions misprinted "build and weave." § 12, line 7, "Hesse's" in all previous editions is here corrected to "Hess's." § 15, line 5, ed. 1 reads correctly "quantities"; later editions misprinted "qualities." § 17 *n.*, line 1 of the note on p. 94, ed. 1 reads "round" for "around." § 18, line 12, "for" altered to "until" as in the author's copy.

Letter 6, § 4, line 15, the words "green or blue" are inserted after "either" as marked by Ruskin in one of his copies.

Letter 7, title, see p. 115 *n.* § 10, line 3, ed. 1 reads correctly "goods"; later editions misprinted "good." § 12, line 18, ed. 1 reads correctly "Christian"; later editions misprinted "Christians." § 13, line 20, ed. 1 reads "thieves and fools"; later editions "fools and thieves"; line 33, "on the labour" has hitherto been misprinted "or the labour." § 18, line 3, ed. 1 reads "spits"; later editions "spit."

Letter 8, title, hitherto "Not as the world gives"; corrected by Ruskin in his copy to "giveth." § 6, line 13, "bleu" is here (as in the Small Edition) a correction for "blue" (in the octavo editions); line 26, see p. 138 *n.*

Letter 9, § 4, line 34, ed. 1 reads "round"; later editions "around." § 5, last line, ed. 1 reads correctly "for ever inimitable"; later editions omit the "for."

Letter 10, § 3, three lines from end, see p. 168 *n.*

Letter 11, § 17, line 30, see p. 194 *n.*; in ed. 1 there was the following terminal note:—

> "☞ *The December Number of 'Fors Clavigera' will be published, D.V., on Saturday, December 23rd; the Number for January 1872 on Monday, January 1st.*"

Letter 13, § 6, ninth line from end, "December" is here a correction for "November." § 8, lines 9 and 10, for "with idealization of pudding," ed. 1 reads "with speculative pudding."

Letter 14, § 4, note, line 3, "idiotcy" in ed. 1, corrected by Ruskin to "idiocy"; § 5, line 9, the words "don't bring any spoil home, but" are inserted in accordance with Ruskin's revision in his copy. § 6, line 13, ed. 1 reads "Henry the Fowler in Germany"; line 31, "or woodcuts" in ed. 1, which is clearly right; misprinted "of woodcuts" in later editions. Notes and Correspondence, for additional matter in ed. 1, see p. 257 *n.*

Letter 15, § 1, line 16, all previous editions omitted the words "honourably industrious" before "multitudes" (see p. 260 *n.*). § 10, first note, last line but one, ed. 1 reads "Only the soldier is truly free, and only the merchants, who . . ." § 15, last line, and § 16, line 18, "Fisk" is here a correction for "Fiske" (so also in Letter 16, § 2).

Letter 16, § 3, line 12, "in" was correctly printed in ed. 1; later editions misprinted it as "is" (with unfortunate consequences to the grammar of the sentence); line 20, "1872" was misprinted "1822" in ed. 1. § 10, "Xeres" was misprinted "Xerxes" in ed. 3. § 12, p. 289, lines 16–19, the construction of the sentence (by Ruskin's correspondent) has here been mended; the passage has hitherto been printed "Glasgow, for instance, has no splendid buildings. She has increased . . . Exchange; but except her grand old Cathedral. . ." Page 290, ninth line from bottom, "150,000" is here a correction for "180,000."

Letter 17, § 7, p. 297, last line but one of the author's third note, "Jehan" is here a correction for "Jean."

Letter 18, § 9, line 14, hitherto "I heard the Rev. Mr. Tipple"; the alteration in the text is Ruskin's in his own copy; and so, in line 20, he substituted "the Rev. Pardoner" for "the Rev. Mr. Tipple." See p. 311 *n.* § 13, line 9, "the love of" inserted by Ruskin in his copy. § 16, the italics are also introduced from it.

Letter 19, § 3, line 35, "friends" in ed. 1 (rightly); afterwards misprinted "friend." § 8, line 20, ed. 1 misprinted "size in shape" for "size and shape." §§ 10, 13, 16, italics as marked by Ruskin in his copy.

Letter 20, § 6, line 4, ed. 1 has "mind" for "minds."

Letter 21, § 20, line 22, "savants" has hitherto been misprinted "servants."

Letter 22, § 5, see pp. 374–375 *nn.* § 20, lines 31–33, the sense has been made clearer in the present edition by revised punctuation, the passage having hitherto been printed ". . . for such; unless when their people got drunk, (which sometimes happened, with sorrowful issue,) and all equality . . ." § 24, lines 7 and 8, the words "in order" and the brackets are now inserted in accordance with Ruskin's corrections in one of his copies.

Letter 23, § 10, last line but two, "Fig. 8" is here substituted for "the frontispiece." § 22, line 13, the reference to Cary, "line 120" is now corrected to "line 130."

Letter 24, § 11, line 11, "soul" is italicised in accordance with Ruskin's revision. § 15, in the first line of the quotation from *Othello* "Not" is here a correction for "Nor." § 22, author's first note, the correction of "insert" to "omit" was made by him in a note to Letter 25.

Letter 25, § 16, footnote, previous editions add after "translation," "By the way, in last *Fors*, p. 21, note, for 'insert,' read 'omit.'" The correction has now been made. § 24, ed. 1 reads "Neither are vulgar."

Letter 26, § 6, line 35, "Fisk" is here a correction for "Fiske." § 7, line 1, "Mr. Emerson's" is Ruskin's correction for "his." § 8, line 23, "here" is his correction for "now." § 11, line 8, "saw" is italicised by him.

Letter 28, § 9, line 18, in ed. 1 "disorderly" was misprinted "orderly"; in many of the copies the "dis" was inserted by hand. Notes and correspondence (Question 6), here § 22, p. 525, ed. 1 misprinted ". . . productive labour? and what if it employs them all in productive labour."

Letter 29, § 13, in the quotation from Moore's *View of Society in France*, on p. 541, line 1, dots are now introduced after "tender air," as Ruskin here omits a passage; and at the end of the last paragraph but one, "I lent . . . to pay the taxes" is corrected, in accordance with Moore's text, from "I have lent . . . to pay taxes."

Letter 30, § 2, line 7, "for" inserted by Ruskin in one of his copies. § 3, line 38, "eighth" for "ninth" in ed. 1, which also in line 40 misprinted "yoe for" "you." § 4, line 2, "fall" was misprinted "all" in ed. 1.

Letter 31, §§ 4, 12, the spelling "Stuart" or "Stewart" has varied in various editions. Ed. 1 "Stuart" is now followed. § 8, line 2, "23rd and 24th," here corrected to "26th and 27th." § 12, line 8, in the quotation from the *Heart of Midlothian*, "horse's" has hitherto been omitted before "feet."

Letter 32, § 1, last line, "end" is italicised by Ruskin in his copy, and in § 2, line 1, "death" is inserted. § 2, line 14, "in" after "indulge" is here omitted as it does not occur in the original. § 5 (5) "Adam" is here a correction for "Adams."

Letter 33, § 2, line 18 *n.*, "62" is here a correction for "52." § 6, lines 3, 4, see p. 610 *n.* § 16, seventh line from end, "Pump-room" was misprinted "Pamprom" in ed. 1. § 17, line 11, ed. 1 had "having been probably" for "having probably been." Notes and Correspondence, see p. 622 *n.*

Letter 34, § 10, by a grotesque misprint in all previous editions, the words "Les ont brusquées . . . broussaille," instead of being added to "Has quarrelled with them," have been printed as a separate note to "gone off to Pepperland"! § 12, line 8, "Hirsch" in eds. 1–3 was a misprint for "Hirst."

Letter 35, § 1, line 7 of the quotation, ed. 1 misprinted "with him" for "to him." In line 9 of it, "Sir Philip Sidney's" is here a correction for "his."]

# FORS CLAVIGERA

## LETTERS 1–36

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

# CONTENTS OF VOL. I

## (1871)

### LETTER 1 (*January*)

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LOOKING DOWN FROM INGLEBOROUGH . . . . . 11

1. Political condition of England, external: the doctrine of non-intervention. 2. Internal, prevailing state of misery and beggary: the author will endure it no longer. 3. Must clear himself of responsibility by explaining its causes, and proposes to begin a National Store. 4, 5. Men's prosperity is in their own hands. A Government cannot be created with a word, nor its character defined in a few words. Author a violent Illiberal, but not therefore a Conservative. The White Company. 6. Forms of Government in themselves immaterial and often misleading. The question to be asked of existing Governments is, What they want with your money? 7. The first beginnings of prosperity must be in getting food, clothes, lodging and fuel. Some people have too much of these things; others too little. 8. Teaching science and art will not tend to a better distribution. 9. The net result of a transference of patronage from one industry to another may be zero. 10, 11. The principle of Free Trade in relation to international affairs. 12. Definition of "Wages." Capital, in the form of money or machinery, cannot feed men. All capital is imaginary or unimportant, except the quantity of food existing in the world at any given moment. Men cannot live by lending money to each other, and the conditions of such loan at present are absurd and deadly.[1] 13, 14. James, William, and the plane: "the Position of William."

### LETTER 2 (*February*)

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[1] Much of this summary of the contents of Letter 1 (as also in the case of Letters 2–7) is taken from the "rough abstract" given by Ruskin in Letter 43 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 108–110).

PAGE

producing nothing; the other, unsupported by capital, producing all things. 12. An example of the first kind. 13, 14. An example of the second. 15. The first condition of labour is being put to wholesome and useful work. 16. The upper classes have been one large Picnic Party. 17. What they might have done. 18. What they have done: a picture of the Franco-German war. 19. A picture of domestic life in London. 20. The feeding of the "Woolwich infant" and the starving of Wapping infants. 21. The prospectus of the Boardmen's and General Advertising Co-operative Society. We had better employ ourselves without any appeal to the capitalists. 22. To do this successfully, it must be with three resolutions—namely, to be personally honest, socially helpful, and conditionally obedient. St. George's Vow.

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LETTER 4 (*April*)

SWITCHES OF BROOM . . . . . 60

1. April, the month of opening. 2. The value and nature of Education. It may be good, bad, or neither. Knowledge is not education, and cannot make us either happy or rich. Author's Swiss guide saying of him, "Le pauvre enfant, il ne sait pas vivre." 3. Author not a whit happier for his knowledge or possessions. 4. The rewards of scientific research. 5. Author's minerals and how they were earned. Discussion of the nature and use of riches. 6. Criticism of Mill's definition of productive labour: "that which produces utilities fixed and embodied in material objects." 7. Author asks what he is to do with his money. 8. Statement of his funds, lands, and houses. Discussion of the origin of wealth. 9. Wealth as future taxation. The golden rain, where does it come from? 10. Pillage of the poor by the idle, and of the idle by the poor. An instance of frank theft: extract from Froissart about the English army in France before the battle of Crécy. 11. Mediæval and modern warfare. Modern economics. 12. Pillage by kings, ecclesiastics, and lawyers.

## LETTER 5 (*May*)

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THE WHITE-THORN BLOSSOM . . . . . 79

1. Author fears that his readers may never come to understand the quotation from the Song of Solomon given at the head of this letter. 2. The joy of Love and the honour of Home have been piteously lost. 3. "Over-production the cause of distress," the acme of economic folly. 4. Statue of Newfoundland Dog in Kensington Museum, the acme of misapplied art. 5. A lecture on Botany: "no such thing as a flower," the summary of modern science. 6. Real meaning of that saying—the marriage of leaves. 7. In a certain sense the lecturer was right, but in the deepest sense wrong—true science is "savoir vivre," modern science "savoir mourir." 8, 9. The power of machines; they cannot increase the possibilities of life, but only the possibilities of idleness. Modern science cannot make use of its discoveries—telegraphy, photography. "Railroad Enterprise": "every fool in Buxton can be at Bakewell in half-an-hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton." 10. Machinery will not increase the possibilities of life, but only of idleness. 11. Machinery will not increase happiness. Peasant life in Bavaria; and mashing to the whistle of a steam-plough. 12. Have women more dresses, or are they tidier, since the introduction of power-looms? 13. Have the workers been allowed to get the use of the goblin's work? 14. The things which are essential to life are mainly three material ones and three spiritual ones. 15. Pure Air. 16. Water. 17. Earth—the Gardens of Paris. 18. Admiration—Hope—Love. 19. First sketch of the proposed action of St. George's Company. Author's appeal—will any give the tenth of what they have, and of what they earn, to make a happy England? 20. Author will do so—St. George's Fund. 21. What the author proposes, and on what conditions he will accept help. The purchase of land; workmen to become "minute squires" (see p. 330).

## LETTER 6 (*June*)

ELYSIAN FIELDS[1] . . . . . 98

(General subject: the Elysium of modern days.) 1. Author writes *Fors* in a desultory way in order to provoke its readers to think. 2. Price of *Fors* equal to two pots of beer—author does not write his opinions, but only what he knows, and that is what people call his "arrogance." 3. What it has cost the author in thought, reading, and money to produce *Fors*; his method of selling it and his other books. 4 and 5. Wild hyacinths, the battle of Marathon, and the Elysian Fields. 6. Pottery and musical instruments were made before the introduction of steam—Palissy and the Tuileries. 7, 8. Country boy at Abingdon listlessly watching two dogs at play. 9. Idleness and its results

[1] This letter, says Ruskin in Letter 43, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 109), "written under the excitement of continual news of the revolution in Paris, is desultory"; it notices "some of the causes of that revolution: chiefly the idleness, disobedience, and covetousness of the richer and middle classes."

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—Paris Communists—Church plate and candlesticks—modern and old scientific view of the sun—wax candles for church service at Abbeville and the want of them by cottagers' wives. 10. The masculine aristocracy of Europe: their conduct. 11. The sin of the destruction of Paris not the rabble's, but that of those who have sought only "the entertainment of the hour." 12. Giotto's *Covetousness*, and one of her ministering angels as drawn by Holbein. 13. Holbein—Sir Thomas More and Henry VIII. 14. The Louvre and the Tuileries in flames. The destructive and non-productive capacity of petroleum.

LETTER 7 (*July*)

CHARITAS . . . . . 115

(General subject: the Elysium of ancient days.[1]) 1. Effect of the fighting in Paris upon author's friends and himself. 2. Parisian notion of Communism differs from author's. 3. Present meaning of "Ouvrier," to *undo* good work—4. How "laisses faire" is being replaced by "laisses *refaire*." 5. The definitions of true and spurious Communism. Communism of the old school. 6. Extract from More's *Utopia*. 7, 8. How thoroughgoing Communists of the old School behave respecting work; and respecting property—9. How they may be classed according to their shade of redness—the rose-red division—10, the vermilion or Tyrian-red sect—11, which dreads getting miserly of virtue—12, and hates all manner of thieving. 13. Reason for war, that the majority of people are thieves—and the guilty thieves of Europe are the capitalists. 14. The filtration of riches—the *Spectator* prefers a Lancashire cotton mill to a Titian. 15. An income tax the only honest and right one. 16. Do good work, whether you live or die—and die rather than make any destroying mechanism or compound. 17. Charity, as drawn by Giotto. 18. The crime of making war machinery. 19. Seek to revenge no injury. 20. Learn to obey good laws.

LETTER 8 (*August*)

NOT AS THE WORLD GIVETH . . . . . 132

1. The storm-cloud of the nineteenth century—2. It looks as if it were made of dead men's souls. 3–5. The French war indemnity, and how the interest on the loan will have to be paid. 6. Ladies at the Queen's concert—ouvrier and pétroleuse. War; and Peace "not as the world giveth." 7. Objection to an income tax in France—it would be the inquisition—the Inquisition must come—glass pockets. 8. Author has sold some houses, but has great difficulty in getting settlement owing to uncertainty about the stamp duty. 9. Author gives £1000 to St. George's Fund. 10. How the money is to be used—proposal to buy land and cultivate it by manual labour—how the children

[1] For a note by Ruskin on the contents of this letter, see Letter 43, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 110).

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are to be educated, and taught the history of five cities. 11. Utopia and Kakotopia. 12. Isaiah liv. 11–17: establishment of the nations in righteousness (*i.e.*, justice).

LETTER 9 (*September*)

HONOUR TO WHOM HONOUR . . . . . 146

1. Author's scheme and newspaper criticism. 2. As many British children as possible to be trained in healthy, brave, and kindly life. 3. True justice consists in granting every human being due aid in the development of their faculties. 4. *Due* aid, not *equal* aid—most pains to be taken with best material. 5. No competitive examination. 6. Scottish student asks, "Do you think, sir, that I shall ever draw as well as Turner?" 7. The result of modern system of prize-giving and competition upon this Scottish student. 8. A man's happiness consists infinitely more in admiration of the faculties of others than in confidence in his own. 9. Respect and obedience. 10. The *Agincourt*—seamen in iron ships, impossible. 11. The chivalries of the Horse and the Wave. 12. *Pudor*, and its negative, *impudence*—the commemoration of heroes. 13. Author's scheme requires patience, but he is hopeful of success. 14. Author must do his own proper work first—the Kensington system of Art teaching—the founding by author of a Mastership of Drawing at Oxford. 15. The conditions necessary for the Arts of men are the best for their souls and bodies. 16. The trustees of St. George's Fund, and their duties—author believes that gentlemen of England will see the necessity of living on, and farming, their estates. 17. Modern manners: "A Trip to Margate" (letters in the *Times*). 18. The historical and natural interest of Margate. 19. The loveliest skies in Europe are to be seen in the Isle of Thanet, said Turner, and author agrees with him.

LETTER 10 (*October*)

THE BARON'S GATE . . . . . 165

1. A landlord cultivating huge farms for himself. 2–8. Autobiographical. 9 and 10. French Republicans and Napoleon III. 11–13. On the clergy as the only friends of the poor. 14. That "you must not have large cities" asserted by a minister to be "an unpractical saying." 15. Miss Octavia Hill's management of the author's property in Marylebone. 16. Ruin of absentee landlords predicted. 17. The *Telegraph's* beau-ideal of the landowner—the Black Countess and "her sainted Derby" in *Peveril of the Peak*. 18. Giotto's imagination of Injustice, and the author's. 19. "Carlyle is the only living writer who has spoken the absolute and perpetual truth about yourselves and your business." 20. Eternity of good law, and the need of obedience to it: "good work for your bread" and "good bread for your work."

## LETTER 11 (*November*)

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THE ABBOT'S CHAPEL[1] . . . . . 181

1, 2. Author is accused of writing above the level of those whom he addresses; and asks why workmen are assumed not to understand scholar's English. A statement that something had been settled by seventy-two newspapers. 3 and 4. Author with some lady friends at Furness Abbey comes into contact with navvies. 5. The necessity of turnips (as typical of everything) being produced for our daily sustenance—the peasant paymasters and their attendant crowd of polite persons. 6. The artist as provider of clothes and house. 7. The peasant as fairly dealt with, and as in the "position of William." 8–11. Professor Fawcett's definition of rent, wages, and profit, criticised. 12. Want of consideration of justice in the demands of workmen. 13. Mr. "Justice in Person" criticised by author. Land and Tools should belong to those who can use them. 14. Giotto's Image of Justice. 15. The chairman of the Midland Railway and his statement that the remuneration of labour depends altogether on the law of supply and demand. 16. The famine in Persia. 17. Author is a practical person and wishes to make people sound and merry instead of fast and sulky—a merry Tyrolese peasant. 18. Mr. Zion Ward—the prize of *Fors*. 19. Nobody has a right to have opinions—author's plan is not an experiment. 20–23. Author might devote his garden to public service, but instead has bought other land for that purpose, and intends to give £7000 to St. George's Fund.

## LETTER 12 (*December*)

THE PRINCE'S LESSON . . . . . 199

1. The author's gift of £7000, and the difficulties imposed by English law. 2–10. History of the first Christmas; its reality—what does the festival mean to you now? 11. Think less of praising God, and more of pleasing Him—12. And cease quarrelling about your opinions of Him. The Egyptian darkness caused by smoke cast forth by modern furnaces. 13. An ecclesiastical trial before the Privy Council. 14. Mill's statement, "scarcely any means open to a woman of gaining a livelihood, except as a wife and mother." The "poor girl of Nazareth." 15–17. The shepherds and "David's village." They came to see, and returned—celebrated shepherds. 18. The visit of the Magi. 19. A wise Greek's account of the education of the princes of Persia. 20. Cassell's *Educator*, the patent filter of modern human faculty. 21. Ancient and modern systems of education compared. A Raphael too dear, although we can afford ironclads. 22. Obedience. 23. Oil of Gethsemane and petroleum. 24. Prosperity measured by consumption of beer and tobacco. 25. We must *see* God before we can be allowed to help Him. 26. The use of American expressions causes a sense of sudden chill. 27. Intrinsic value—its recognition by the Magi, and its denial by the misteaching of our day. 28–32. The Nativity—the Life of Christ and its lessons.

[1] For a reference by Ruskin to this letter, and a statement of the proposition which it was meant to enforce, see Letter 67 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 654).

# FORS CLAVIGERA[1]

## LETTER 1

### LOOKING DOWN FROM INGLEBOROUGH[2]

DENMARK HILL,
*1st January*, 1871.[3]

1. FRIENDS,—We begin to-day another group of ten years, not in happy circumstances.[4] Although, for the time, exempted from the direct calamities which have fallen on neighbouring states, believe me, we have not escaped them because of our better deservings, nor by our better wisdom; but only for one or two bad reasons, or for both: either that we have not sense enough to determine in a great national quarrel which side is right, or that we have not courage to defend the right, when we have discerned it.[5]

[1] [As originally issued, each letter of *Fors Clavigera* contained an "Advertisement" (printed on p. 2 in Letters 1–20, on p. 4 of the *cover* in Letters 21–96):—

"For reasons which will be explained in the course of these Letters, the Author wishes to retain complete command over their mode of publication.

"For the present, they will be sold only by Mr. G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent.

"They will be sold for Sevenpence each, without abatement on quantity, and forwarded, post paid, on remittance of the price of the number required, to any place in the United Kingdom.

"I send a copy to each of the principal journals and periodicals, to be noticed or not, at their pleasure: otherwise I shall use no advertisements."

After Letter 6, "the Author wishes" was altered to "I wish." For later alterations, see Bibliographical Note. For the "reasons" referred to, see below, pp. 49, 98–101, 257–258, 354.]

[2] [For the meaning of the title, see below, § 11 n. (p. 23); and compare Letter 90, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 430).]

[3] [It should be noticed that the dates at the beginning of the letters do not always indicate when they were written.]

[4] [For Ruskin's restatement, in a later letter, of the proposition contained in § 1 here, see below, p. 376.]

[5] [For other references to the Franco-German war, see Vol. XX. pp. 199, 401; Vol. XXIII. pp. 23, 145; and Vol. XXV. p. 329; compare also, below, p. 131. For the effect that it had on the course of *Fors*, see Letter 22, § 17 (p. 382); and for Ruskin's view of the policy of non-intervention in general, Vol. XVIII. pp. xxii.–xxvi.]

I believe that both these bad reasons exist in full force; that our own political divisions prevent us from understanding the laws of international justice; and that, even if we did, we should not dare to defend, perhaps not even to assert them, being on this first of January, 1871, in much bodily fear; that is to say, afraid of the Russians; afraid of the Prussians; afraid of the Americans; afraid of the Hindoos; afraid of the Chinese; afraid of the Japanese; afraid of the New Zealanders; and afraid of the Caffres:[1] and very justly so, being conscious that our only real desire respecting any of these nations has been to get as much out of them as we could.

They have no right to complain of us, notwithstanding, since we have all, lately, lived ourselves in the daily endeavour to get as much out of our neighbours and friends as we could; and having by this means, indeed, got a good deal out of each other, and put nothing into each other, the actually obtained result, this day, is a state of emptiness in purse and stomach, for the solace of which our boasted "insular position" is ineffectual.[2]

2. I have listened to many ingenious persons, who say we are better off now than ever we were before. I do not know how well off we were before; but I know positively that many very deserving persons of my acquaintance have great difficulty in living under these improved

[1] ["Afraid of the Prussians": Ruskin, it will be remembered, took the French side warmly in the war. "Afraid of the Americans": he refers to the dispute over the Alabama Claims (see Vol. XXII. p. 140 *n.*). "Afraid of the Hindoos": this appears to be only a general reference to the never quite absent fear of a rising in India. "Afraid of the Chinese": for Ruskin's references to the "opium wars," see Vol. XVIII. pp. xxvi., 82; in the decade before the date of this letter, the services of "Chinese Gordon" had, it will be remembered, been enlisted by the Imperial Government against the rebellious Tai-pings. "Afraid of the Japanese": this, again, appears to be only a general reference—to the continuous efforts of England and other foreign powers to obtain rights of trade, etc., in Japan. "Afraid of the New Zealanders": here Ruskin refers to the long series of Maori wars, of which the previous year (1870) saw the last. "Afraid of the Caffres": for Ruskin's reference here, see Vol. XI. p. 261, Vol. XVII. p. 219 *n.*, and Vol. XXV. p. 130.]

[2] [The reference here is to an article which Mr. Gladstone had contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*, October 1870, in defence of the policy of non-intervention: "Happy England! happy in this, that the wise dispensation of Providence has cut her off, by that streak of silver sea," etc., etc.]

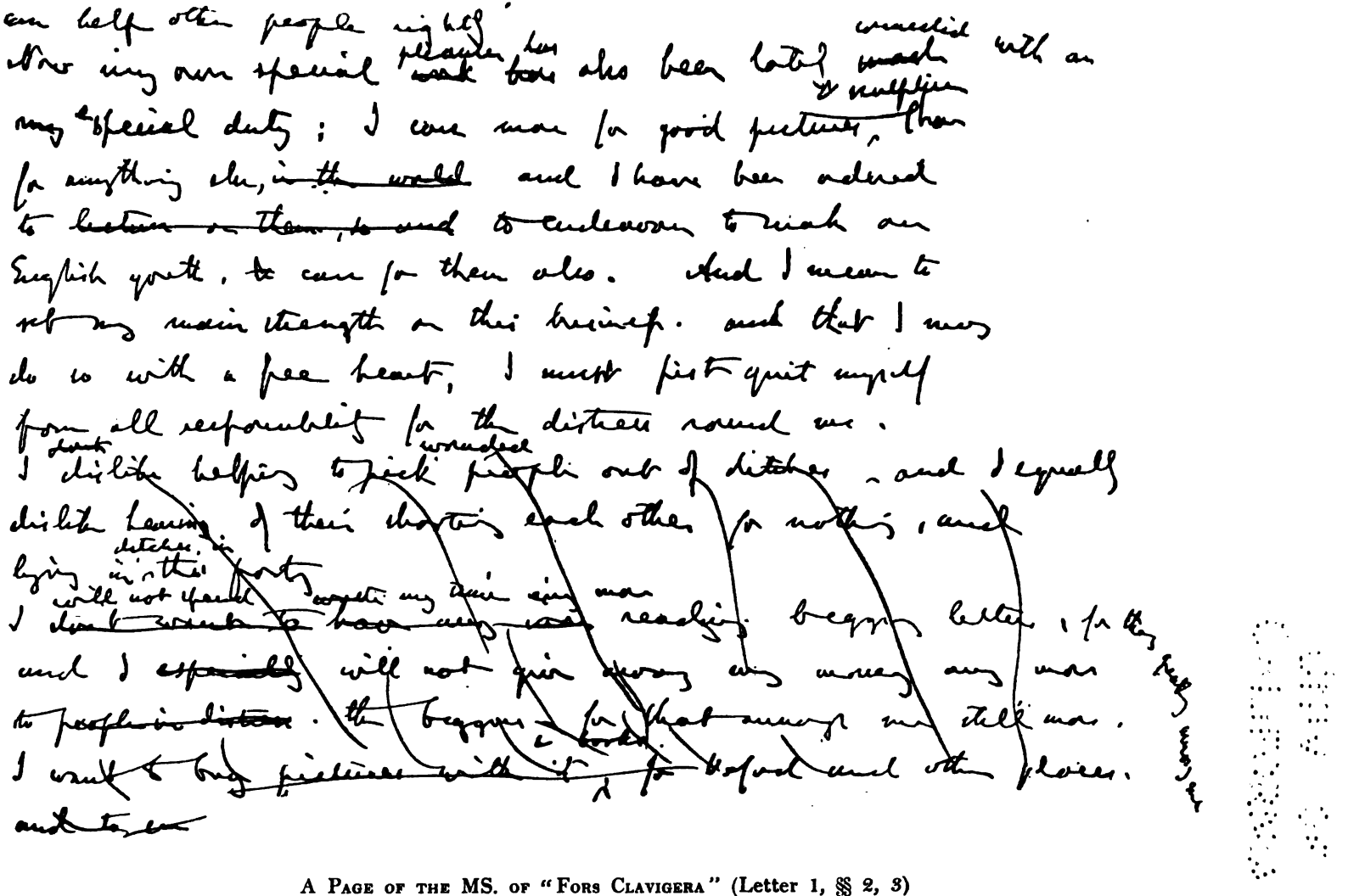
For my own part, I cannot and I will not stand it any longer; — I have no peace in my life. I am not an unselfish person — nor an evangelical one. ~~my plea~~ I have no particular pleasure in doing good, ~~and I don't~~ neither do I dislike doing it so much as to ~~be~~ expect to be rewarded for it ~~after I die~~ in another world — but I simply ~~can get no quiet for my life~~ cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals nor do anything else that I like — and the very ~~look of the~~ light of the morning sky has become hateful to me, because of the misery that I know of, and that I see signs of where I ~~do not~~ know it not.

~~Wh~~ ~~For which reads~~ -

And therefore, as I say, I will not stand it any longer. but will verily henceforward do my poor little best, with anybody else whom I can get to help me — to ~~end~~ abate this misery as I may

And in order that I may do my best, I positively will not be miserable myself any longer, if I can help it.

- for no man who is watched and doubtful [illegible]



A Page of the MS. of "Fors Clavigera" (Letter 1, §§ 2, 3)

pp 12, 13

circumstances: also, that my desk is full of begging letters, eloquently written either by distressed or dishonest people; and that we cannot be called, as a nation, well off, while so many of us are either living in honest or in villainous beggary.[1]

For my own part, I will put up with this state of things, passively, not an hour longer. I am not an unselfish person, nor an Evangelical one; I have no particular pleasure in doing good; neither do I dislike doing it so much as to expect to be rewarded for it in another world. But I simply cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like, and the very light of the morning sky, when there is any—which is seldom, nowadays, near London[2]—has become hateful to me, because of the misery that I know of, and see signs of, where I know it not, which no imagination can interpret too bitterly.

Therefore, as I have said, I will endure it no longer quietly; but henceforward, with any few or many who will help, do my poor best to abate this misery. But that I may do my best, I must not be miserable myself any longer; for no man who is wretched in his own heart, and feeble in his own work, can rightly help others.

8. Now my own special pleasure has lately been connected with a given duty. I have been ordered to endeavour to make our English youth care somewhat for the arts;[3] and must put my uttermost strength into that business. To which end I must clear myself from all sense of responsibility for the material distress around me, by explaining to you, once for all, in the shortest English I can, what I know of its causes; by pointing out to you some of the methods by which it might be relieved; and by setting aside regularly some small percentage of my income, to assist, as one of yourselves, in what one and all we shall

[1] [Ruskin in his copy refers to Letter 4, § 9—as explaining what he means by "honest beggary": see pp. 70, 71.]

[2] [On the "storm-cloud," see Letter 8, § 1 (below, p. 132).]

[3] [*Fors* was started in the second year of Ruskin's Professorship at Oxford; for a general account of which, see Introduction to Vol. XX.]

have to do; each of us laying by something, according to our means, for the common service; and having amongst us, at last, be it ever so small, a National Store instead of a National Debt.[1] Store which, once securely founded, will fast increase, provided only you take the pains to understand, and have perseverance to maintain, the elementary principles of Human Economy, which have, of late, not only been lost sight of, but wilfully and formally entombed under pyramids of falsehood.[2]

4. And first I beg you most solemnly to convince yourselves of the partly comfortable, partly formidable fact, that your prosperity is in your own hands. That only in a remote degree does it depend on external matters, and least of all on forms of government.[3] In all times of trouble the first thing to be done is to make the most of whatever forms of government you have got, by setting honest men to work them; (the trouble, in all probability, having arisen only from the want of such;) and for the rest, you must in no wise concern yourselves about them; more particularly it would be lost time to do so at this moment, when whatever is popularly said about governments cannot but be absurd, for want of definition of terms. Consider, for instance, the ridiculousness of the division of parties into "Liberal" and "Conservative." There is no opposition whatever between those two kinds of men. There is opposition between Liberals and Illiberals; that is to say, between people who desire liberty, and who dislike it. I am a violent Illiberal; but it does not follow that I must be a Conservative. A Conservative is a person who wishes to keep things as they are; and he is opposed to a Destructive, who wishes to destroy them, or to an Innovator, who wishes to alter them. Now, though I am an Illiberal, there are many things I should like to destroy. I should like

[1] [Ruskin in his copy here refers to Letter 7, § 8 (p. 121), as resuming the subject of a National Store. For "National Store" and "National Debt," see *Munera Pulveris* (Vol. XVII. pp. 141, 164 *seq.*).]

[2] [For Ruskin's restatement, in a later letter, of the proposition contained in §§ 2, 3 here, see below, p. 377; and for the restatement of that in § 4, p. 378.]

[3] [On this point, compare Vol. XVII. pp. 245–248, 446.]

to destroy most of the railroads in England, and all the railroads in Wales.[1] I should like to destroy and rebuild the Houses of Parliament, the National Gallery, and the East end of London; and to destroy, without rebuilding, the new town of Edinburgh, the north suburb of Geneva, and the city of New York.[2] Thus in many things I am the reverse of Conservative; nay, there are some long-established things which I hope to see changed before I die; but I want still to keep the fields of England green, and her cheeks red; and that girls should be taught to curtsey, and boys to take their hats off, when a Professor or otherwise dignified person passes by; and that Kings should keep their crowns on their heads, and Bishops their crosiers in their hands; and should duly recognize the significance of the crown, and the use of the crook.[3]

As you would find it thus impossible to class me justly in either party, so you would find it impossible to class any person whatever, who had clear and developed political opinions, and who could define them accurately. Men only associate in parties by sacrificing their opinions, or by having none worth sacrificing; and the effect of party government is always to develop hostilities and hypocrisies, and to extinguish ideas.

5. Thus the so-called Monarchic and Republican parties have thrown Europe into conflagration and shame, merely

[1] [Ruskin in his copy here refers to Letter 5, § 9 (p. 86).]

[2] [For later references to this passage, see Letters 31, § 6 *n.* (p. 365), and 32, §§ 5, 35 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 225, 254). For Ruskin's dislike of the architecture of the Houses of Parliament, see Vol. VII. p. 450 *n.*, Vol. XVIII. p. 408, and Vol. XXII. p. 261; for that of the National Gallery, Vol. X. p. 144 *n.*; for Geneva, past and present, *Præterita*, ii. §§ 84 *seq.*; for the new town of Edinburgh, Vol. I. p. 258. Professor J. S. Blackie had a recollection of Ruskin in this last connexion. "Some forty years ago, I was walking with Ruskin down Princes Street, and he was looking up at the old town which rises high before you. 'When I walk along this grand street,' he said, 'I am always glad when I come to the cross streets, for then I look from the works of man to the works of God.' 'But,' said I, 'have you no eye for those palatial structures which are now rising all along the street to vary the monotony of the original three-storied houses.' 'No,' said he; 'I hate high houses.' 'Why?' said I. 'Because,' said he, 'they are bad for people with rheumatic legs'" ("Illustrated Interview" with Professor Blackie in the *Strand Magazine*, February 1892, vol. iii. p. 228).]

[3] [Here in his copy Ruskin refers to Letter 4, § 12 (pp. 76-77), where he deals with the neglect of duties by kings and bishops.]

for want of clear conception of the things they imagine themselves to fight for. The moment a Republic was proclaimed in France, Garibaldi came to fight for it as a "Holy Republic."[1] But Garibaldi could not know,—no mortal creature could know,—whether it was going to be a Holy or Profane Republic. You cannot evoke any form of government by beat of drum. The proclamation of a government implies the considerate acceptance of a code of laws, and the appointment of means for their execution, neither of which things can be done in an instant. You may overthrow a government, and announce yourselves lawless, in the twinkling of an eye, as you can blow up a ship, or upset and sink one. But you can no more create a government with a word, than an ironclad.

No; nor can you even define its character in few words; the measure of sanctity in it depending on degrees of justice in the administration of law, which are often independent of form altogether. Generally speaking, the community of thieves in London or Paris have adopted Republican Institutions, and live at this day without any acknowledged Captain or Head; but under Robin Hood,[2] brigandage in England, and under Sir John Hawkwood, brigandage in Italy, became strictly monarchical. Theft could not, merely by that dignified form of government, be made a holy manner of life; but it was made both dexterous and decorous. The pages of the English knights under Sir John Hawkwood spent nearly all their spare time in burnishing the knights' armour, and made it always so bright, that they were called "The White Company."[3] And the notary of Tortona, Azario, tells us of them, that these foragers

[1] [Garibaldi was begged to come by General Bordone, who had been with him in 1859. He escaped from Caprera and reached Tours, then the seat of the Provisional Government, on October 8, 1870. See *Garibaldi et l'Armée des Vosges: Récit officiel*, par le Général Bordone: 1871. For other references to Garibaldi, see Letters 3, § 7, and 7, § 5 (below, pp. 51, 117); Letter 76, § 14 (Vol. XXIX. p. 96); and *Præterita*, iii. § 7.]

[2] [Compare Letters 14, § 1, and 22, § 20 (below, pp. 243, 385).]

[3] [For further reference by Ruskin to Sir John Hawkwood and his "White Company," see Letter 15, §§ 10–17 (below, pp. 267–272); and compare *Val d'Arno*, § 188 (Vol. XXIII. p. 112).]

(*furatores*) "were more expert than any plunderers in Lombardy. They for the most part sleep by day, and watch by night, and have such plans and artifices for taking towns, that never were the like or equal of them witnessed." * [1]

6. The actual Prussian expedition into France merely differs from Sir John's in Italy by being more generally savage, much less enjoyable, and by its clumsier devices for taking towns; for Sir John had no occasion to burn their libraries.[2] In neither case does the monarchical form of government bestow any Divine right of theft; but it puts the available forces into a convenient form. Even with respect to convenience only, it is not yet determinable by the evidence of history, what is absolutely the best form of government to live under.[3] There are indeed said to be republican villages (towns?) in America, where everybody is civil, honest, and substantially comfortable;[4] but these villages have several unfair advantages—there are no lawyers in them,[5] no town councils, and no parliaments. Such republicanism, if possible on a large scale, would be

* Communicated to me by my friend Mr. Rawdon Brown, of Venice, from his yet unpublished work, *The English in Italy in the Fourteenth Century*.[6]

[1] ["Sunt furatores excellentiores quibusque aliis prædatoribus Lombardiæ. De die plerumque dormiunt et de nocte vigilant. Et habent talia studia et artificia ad terras capiendas quod nusquam aliqui visi fuerunt similes vel cosequales:" see the History by Azario, p. 380 in vol. xvi. of Muratori's *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*. Compare, below, pp. 249, 269.]

[2] [Ruskin is here thinking of the destruction of the library at Strassburg during the siege (*Times*, October 7, 1870); see his letter in the *Daily Telegraph* of October 8, 1870 (reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. ii. p. 38, and in a later volume of this edition).]

[3] [For some early speculations by Ruskin on this subject (1845), see Vol. VIII. p. 262 *n*. The comparative unimportance of forms of government is one of the main propositions in *Fors Clavigera*; see what Ruskin says to that effect in Letter 67, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 651), and compare, in the present volume, Letter 13, §§ 7, 8 (below, pp. 233–234). See also *Munera Pulveris*, § 125, and *Time and Tide*, § 158 (Vol. XVII. pp. 248, 446).]

[4] ["Republicanism in some forms beautiful, but all of no consequence; Letter 13, § 6, p. 232, chief place."—*MS. note in Author's copy*.]

[5] [See below, p. 55 *n*.]

[6] [Never published; but some notices of Hawkwood are contained in the first volume (1202–1509) of the *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts relating to English Affairs existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice*, edited by Rawdon Brown, 1864. See also *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica*, No. IV., "Memoirs of Sir John Hawkwood," 1782. (The copy in the British Museum has a few MS. additions by R. Brown.) The Memoirs were by Richard Gough. The fullest account of Hawkwood is the Life of him by John Temple-Leader and G. Marcotti (1889).]

worth fighting for; though, in my own private mind, I confess I should like to keep a few lawyers, for the sake of their wigs,[1] and the faces under them—generally very grand when they are really good lawyers—and for their (unprofessional) talk. Also I should like to have a Parliament, into which people might be elected on condition of their never saying anything about politics, that one might still feel sometimes that one was acquainted with an M.P.[2] In the meantime Parliament is a luxury to the British squire, and an honour to the British manufacturer, which you may leave them to enjoy in their own way; provided only you make them always clearly explain, when they tax you, what they want with your money; and that you understand yourselves, what money is, and how it is got, and what it is good for, and bad for.[3]

7. These matters I hope to explain to you in this and some following letters; which, among various other reasons, it is necessary that I should write in order that you may make no mistake as to the real economical results of Art

[1] [Compare Letters 16, § 6 (p. 283); and 38, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 37).]

[2] [The first draft continues:—

"But this kind of republic I have never myself seen; and the republicanism with which I am practically acquainted has consisted always chiefly in roaring about the streets at night, spitting about them by day, throwing stones at statues and windows; and confiscating any property that could be got hold of"—

in which passage Ruskin's recollection went back to his experiences of France in 1848: see Vol. VIII. pp. xxxii., xxxiii., 262 *n.* The draft then continues with a passage which shows how from the first the idea of a guild or company was in Ruskin's mind:—

"And very seriously, my friends, it is not yet determinable from the evidence of history, nor by any effort of reason, what is absolutely the best form of government, to live in, or under. But one thing is both determinable, and long since manifest and evident,—that no wise or happy government of any sort is possible but to honest men, and to industrious men, and to quietly disposed men, who would be glad to live peaceably if they might. Now I do not doubt that many among us are really desirous to be honest, if only honest trade were practicable, and to be industrious, if useful work were to be found; and if only a few of them, recognizing each other, would hold together and carry out, with due respect to the existing laws and constituted authorities of their country, such principles of trade and modes of life as, after due inquiry, they perceived to be just, —though they were but a score or two in beginning,—yet gradually and with such calm and slow growth as good things must usually consent to, they would gather to them other men of like temper, and found an English society which would indeed be an 'Institute' of many things."]

[3] [For a re-statement by Ruskin, in a later letter, of the argument in §§ 6 *seq.* see below, p. 379.]

teaching, whether in the Universities or elsewhere. I will begin by directing your attention particularly to that point.

The first object of all work—not the principal one, but the first and necessary one—is to get food, clothes, lodging, and fuel.

It is quite possible to have too much of all these things. I know a great many gentlemen, who eat too large dinners; a great many ladies, who have too many clothes. I know there is lodging to spare in London, for I have several houses there myself, which I can't let. And I know there is fuel to spare everywhere, since we get up steam to pound the roads with, while our men stand idle;[1] or drink till they can't stand, idle, or any otherwise.

8. Notwithstanding, there is agonizing distress even in this highly favoured England, in some classes, for want of food, clothes, lodging, and fuel.[2] And it has become a popular idea among the benevolent and ingenious, that you may in great part remedy these deficiencies by teaching, to these starving and shivering persons, Science and Art.[3] In their way—as I do not doubt you will believe—I am very fond of both; and I am sure it will be beneficial for the British nation to be lectured upon the merits of Michael Angelo, and the nodes of the moon. But I should strongly object myself to being lectured on either, while I was hungry and cold; and I suppose the same view of the matter would be taken by the greater number of British citizens in those predicaments. So that, I am convinced, their present eagerness for instruction in painting and astronomy proceeds from an impression in their minds that, somehow, they may paint or star-gaze themselves into clothes and victuals. Now it is perfectly true that you may sometimes sell a picture for a thousand pounds; but the chances are greatly against your doing so—much more

[1] [On this subject, compare the "Notes on the General Principles of Employment," Vol. XVII. pp. 543–544.]

[2] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 123 (Vol. XX. p. 114), and the other passages there noted.]

[3] ["*Cf.* Letter 4, § 4; and Letter 5, §§ 3, 4, 7, 8 (pp. 63, 81, 84–85). Needs amplifying and modifying about Science."—*Author's MS. note in his copy.* It may be noted that, in referring to this passage later, Ruskin speaks of it as saying "that people cannot live by art": see Letter 67, § 10 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 646).]

than the chances of a lottery. In the first place, you must paint a very clever picture; and the chances are greatly against your doing that. In the second place, you must meet with an amiable picture-dealer; and the chances are somewhat against your doing that. In the third place, the amiable picture-dealer must meet with a fool; and the chances are not always in favour even of his doing that—though, as I gave exactly the sum in question for a picture myself, only the other day,[1] it is not for me to say so. Assume, however, to put the case most favourably, that what with the practical results of the energies of Mr. Cole, at Kensington,[2] and the æsthetic impressions produced by various lectures at Cambridge and Oxford, the profits of art employment might be counted on as a rateable income. Suppose even that the ladies of the richer classes should come to delight no less in new pictures than in new dresses; and that picture-making should thus become as constant and lucrative an occupation as dress-making. Still, you know, they can't buy pictures and dresses too. If they buy two pictures a day, they can't buy two dresses a day; or if they do, they must save in something else. They have but a certain income, be it never so large. They spend that now; and you can't get more out of them. Even if they lay by money, the time comes when somebody must spend it. You will find that they do verily spend now all they have, neither more nor less. If ever they seem to spend more, it is only by running in debt, and not paying; if they for a time spend less, some day the overplus must come into circulation. All they have, they spend; more than that, they cannot at any time; less than that, they can only for a short time.

9. Whenever, therefore, any new industry, such as this of picture-making, is invented, of which the profits depend on patronage, it merely means that you have effected a

[1] [Meissonier's "1814": see Vol. XIV. pp. 381, 438. For another reference to this purchase, see below, p. 67.]

[2] [For other references to Mr. (afterwards Sir Henry) Cole, see Vol. XVI. pp. xxvi.–xxviii., 265; and for the "Kensington" system of art-teaching, see below, p. 605.]

diversion of the current of money in your own favour, and to somebody else's loss. Nothing, really, has been gained by the nation, though probably much time and wit, as well as sundry people's senses, have been lost. Before such a diversion can be effected, a great many kind things must have been done; a great deal of excellent advice given; and an immense quantity of ingenious trouble taken: the arithmetical course of the business throughout being, that for every penny you are yourself better, somebody else is a penny the worse; and the net result of the whole, precisely zero.

Zero, of course, I mean, so far as money is concerned. It may be more dignified for working women to paint than to embroider; and it may be a very charming piece of self-denial, in a young lady, to order a high art fresco instead of a ball-dress; but as far as cakes and ale[1] are concerned, it is all the same,—there is but so much money to be got by you, or spent by her, and not one farthing more, usually a great deal less, by high art than by low. Zero, also, observe, I mean partly in a complimentary sense to the work executed. If you have done no good by painting, at least you have done no serious mischief. A bad picture is indeed a dull thing to have in a house, and in a certain sense a mischievous thing; but it won't blow the roof off. Whereas, of most things which the English, French, and Germans are paid for making nowadays,—cartridges, cannon, and the like,—you know the best thing we can possibly hope is that they *may* be useless, and the net result of them, zero.[2]

10. The thing, therefore, that you have to ascertain approximately, in order to determine on some consistent organization, is the maximum of wages-fund you have to depend on to start with, that is to say, virtually the sum of the income of the gentlemen of England. Do not trouble yourselves at first about France or Germany, or any other foreign country. The principle of free trade is,

[1] [*Twelfth Night*, Act ii. sc. 3.]

[2] ["Zero needs amplifying into Minus. You have got nothing (but out of other people). But you have also wasted all your own producing time and power, and are minus that."—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

that French gentlemen should employ English workmen, for whatever the English can do better than the French; and that English gentlemen should employ French workmen, for whatever the French can do better than the English. It is a very right principle, but merely extends the question to a wider field. Suppose, for the present, that France, and every other country but your own, were —what I suppose you would, if you had your way, like them to be—sunk under water, and that England were the only country in the world. Then, how would you live in it most comfortably? Find out that, and you will then easily find how two countries can exist together; or more, not only without need for fighting, but to each other's advantage.

11. For, indeed, the laws by which two next-door neighbours might live most happily—the one not being the better for his neighbour's poverty, but the worse, and the better for his neighbour's prosperity—are those also by which it is convenient and wise for two parishes, two provinces, or two kingdoms, to live side by side. And the nature of every commercial and military operation which takes place in Europe, or in the world, may always be best investigated by supposing it limited to the districts of a single country.[1] Kent and Northumberland exchange hops and coals on precisely the same economical principles as Italy and England exchange oil for iron; and the essential character of the war between Germany and France may be best understood by supposing it a dispute between Lancaster and Yorkshire for the line of the Ribble. Suppose that Lancashire, having absorbed Cumberland and Cheshire, and been much insulted and troubled by Yorkshire in consequence, and at last attacked; and having victoriously repulsed the attack, and retaining old grudges against Yorkshire, about the colour of roses,[2] from the fifteenth century, declares that it cannot possibly be safe against the attacks of Yorkshire any longer,

[1] [Compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 96 (Vol. XVII. p. 218).]

[2] [For other references to the Wars of the Roses, see Vol. XVIII. p. 501, and Vol. XX. p. 210.]

unless it gets the townships of Giggleswick and Wigglesworth, and a fortress on Pen-y-gent. Yorkshire replying that this is totally inadmissible, and that it will eat its last horse, and perish to its last Yorkshireman, rather than part with a stone of Giggleswick, a crag of Pen-y-gent, or a ripple of Ribble,—Lancashire with its Cumbrian and Cheshire contingents invades Yorkshire, and meeting with much Divine assistance,[1] ravages the West Riding, and besieges York on Christmas day. That is the actual gist of the whole business; and in the same manner you may see the downright common sense—if any is to be seen—of other human proceedings, by taking them first under narrow and homely conditions. So, for the present, we will fancy ourselves, what you tell me you all want to be, independent: we will take no account of any other country but Britain;[2] and on that condition I will begin to show you in my next paper how we ought to live,[3] after ascertaining the utmost limits of the wages-fund, which means the income of our gentlemen; that is to say, essentially, the income of those who have command of the land, and therefore of all food.

12. What you call "wages," practically, is the quantity of food which the possessor of the land gives you, to work for him. There is, finally, no "capital" but that. If all the money of all the capitalists in the whole world were destroyed, the notes and bills burnt, the gold irrecoverably buried, and all the machines and apparatus of manufactures crushed, by a mistake in signals, in one catastrophe; and nothing remained but the land, with its animals and vegetables, and buildings for shelter,—the poorer population would be very little worse off than they are at this instant;

[1] [Here Ruskin has a hit at the King of Prussia's despatches to Queen Augusta (as, for instance, from Sedan on September 3) during the Franco-German war, which were parodied at the time in the lines: "Thanks be to God, my dear Augusta, We've had another awful buster; Ten thousand Frenchmen sent below, Praise God from whom all blessings flow." Compare Letter 40, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 69).]

[2] [Ruskin in his copy here writes, "Looking from Ingleborough"—thus indicating the meaning of the title which he afterwards gave to this letter: it is a survey of "the condition of England question" from Ingleborough.]

[3] [See below, p. 44; and then, pp. 61, 90.]

and their labour, instead of being "limited" by the destruction, would be greatly stimulated. They would feed themselves from the animals and growing crops; heap here and there a few tons of ironstone together, build rough walls round them to get a blast, and, in a fortnight, they would have iron tools again, and be ploughing and fighting, just as usual. It is only we who had the capital who would suffer; we should not be able to live idle, as we do now, and many of us—I, for instance—should starve at once: but you, though little the worse, would none of you be the better eventually, for our loss—or starvation. The removal of superfluous mouths would indeed benefit you somewhat, for a time; but you would soon replace them with hungrier ones; and there are many of us who are quite worth our meat to you in different ways, which I will explain in due place:[1] also I will show you that our money is really likely to be useful to you in its accumulated form (besides that, in the instances when it has been won by work, it justly belongs to us), so only that you are careful never to let us persuade you into borrowing it, and paying us interest for it. You will find a very amusing story, explaining your position in that case, at the 117th page of the *Manual of Political Economy*, published this year at Cambridge, for your early instruction, in an almost devotionally catechetical form, by Messrs. Macmillan.[2]

18. Perhaps I had better quote it to you entire: it is taken by the author "from the French":—

> There was once in a village a poor carpenter, who worked hard from morning to night. One day James thought to himself, "With my hatchet, saw, and hammer, I can only make coarse furniture, and can only get the pay for such. If I had a plane, I should please my customers more, and they would pay me more. Yes, I am resolved, I will make myself a plane." At the end of ten days, James had in his possession an admirable

[1] [As, for instance, in the case of Squires, in Letter 2; and in that of literary and artistic persons, below, p. 185, and Letter 67, § 10 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 646).]

[2] [*Political Economy for Beginners*, by Millicent Garrett Fawcett, pp. 116–118; published at London and Cambridge, and therefore (as also because the writer was the wife of the Professor of Political Economy) called by Ruskin "the Cambridge Catechism" (see pp. 31, 187). Mrs. Fawcett abridges her example from Bastiat's *Capital et Rente*, Paris, 1849, pp. 30 *seq.* ("Le rabot"). For another reference to the passage, see Letter 81, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 200).]

plane which he valued all the more for having made it himself. Whilst he was reckoning all the profits which he expected to derive from the use of it, he was interrupted by William, a carpenter in the neighbouring village. William, having admired the plane, was struck with the advantages which might be gained from it. He said to James—

"You must do me a service; lend me the plane for a year." As might be expected, James cried out, "How can you think of such a thing, William? Well, if I do you this service, what will you do for me in return?"

*W.* Nothing. Don't you know that a loan ought to be gratuitous?

*J.* I know nothing of the sort; but I do know that if I were to lend you my plane for a year, it would be giving it to you. To tell you the truth, that was not what I made it for.

*W.* Very well, then; I ask you to do me a service; what service do you ask me in return?

*J.* First, then, in a year the plane will be done for. You must therefore give me another exactly like it.

*W.* That is perfectly just. I submit to these conditions. I think you must be satisfied with this, and can require nothing further.

*J.* I think otherwise. I made the plane for myself, and not for you. I expected to gain some advantage from it. I have made the plane for the purpose of improving my work and my condition; if you merely return it to me in a year, it is you who will gain the profit of it during the whole of that time. I am not bound to do you such a service without receiving anything in return. Therefore, if you wish for my plane, besides the restoration already bargained for, you must give me a new plank as a compensation for the advantages of which I shall be deprived.

These terms were agreed to, but the singular part of it is that at the end of the year, when the plane came into James's possession, he lent it again; recovered it, and lent it a third and fourth time. It has passed into the hands of his son, who still lends it. Let us examine this little story. The plane is the symbol of all capital, and the plank is the symbol of all interest.

If this be an abridgment, what a graceful piece of highly wrought literature the original story must be! I take the liberty of abridging it a little more.

James makes a plane, lends it to William on 1st January for a year. William gives him a plank for the loan of it, wears it out, and makes another for James which he gives him on 31st December. On 1st January he again borrows the new one; and the arrangement is repeated continuously. The position of William[1] therefore is, that he makes a plane every 31st of December; lends it to James till the next day, and pays James a plank annually for the privilege

[1] [For other references to "the position of William," see below, pp. 90, 136, 187, 600.]

of lending it to him on that evening. This, in future investigations of capital and interest, we will call, if you please, "the Position of William."

14. You may not at the first glance see where the fallacy lies (the writer of the story evidently counts on your not seeing it at all).

If James did not lend the plane to William, he could only get his gain of a plank by working with it himself, and wearing it out himself. When he had worn it out at the end of the year, he would, therefore, have to make another for himself. William, working with it instead, gets the advantage instead, which he must, therefore, pay James his plank for; and return to James, what James would, if he had not lent his plane, then have had—not a new plane —but the worn-out one. James must make a new one for himself, as he would have had to do if no William had existed; and if William likes to borrow it again for another plank—all is fair.[1]

That is to say, clearing the story of its nonsense, that James makes a plane annually, and sells it to William for its proper price, which, in kind, is a new plank. But this arrangement has nothing whatever to do with principal or with interest. There are, indeed, many very subtle conditions involved in any sale; one among which is the value of ideas; I will explain that value to you in the course of time[2] (the article is not one which modern political economists have any familiarity with dealings in); and I will tell you somewhat also of the real nature of interest;[3] but if you will only get, for the present, a quite clear idea of "the Position of William," it is all I want of you.[4]

I remain, your faithful friend,

JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] ["Interest. No lending ever to be on interest. 'Borrowing' is not the proper word for using for a while and returning scatheless."—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

[2] [The explanation is again promised in Letter 18 (p. 317); is partially given in Letter 31 (p. 580); and is more fully discussed in Letters 44 and 67 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 128, 646).]

[3] [See pp. 319, 363, 378.]

[4] ["*Cf.* Letter 8, § 4" (p. 136).—*MS. note by Author.*]

## LETTER 2

### THE GREAT PICNIC[1]

DENMARK HILL,
*1st February* 1871.

1. FRIENDS,—Before going farther, you may like to know, and ought to know, what I mean by the title of these Letters;[2] and why it is in Latin. I can only tell you in part, for the Letters will be on many things, if I am able to carry out my plan in them; and that title means many things, and is in Latin, because I could not have given an English one that meant so many. We, indeed, were not till lately a loquacious people, nor a useless one; but the Romans did more, and said less, than any other nation that ever lived; and their language is the most heroic ever spoken by men.[3]

Therefore I wish you to know, at least, some words of it, and to recognize what thoughts they stand for.

Some day, I hope you may know—and that European workmen may know—many words of it;[4] but even a few will be useful.

Do not smile at my saying so. Of Arithmetic, Geometry, and Chemistry, you can know but little, at the utmost; but that little, well learnt, serves you well. And a little Latin, well learnt, will serve you also, and in a higher way than any of these.

2. "Fors" is the best part of three good English words,

[1] [For the meaning of the title, see below, § 16, p. 39.]

[2] [For other passages in which Ruskin draws out the meaning of *Fors Clavigera*, see below, p. 231 *n.*]

[3] [Compare *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. § 24, where, in contrasting English with Latin, Ruskin speaks of the "metallic or crystalline condensation" of the latter.]

[4] [For a reference to the ridicule cast in comic papers on the recommendation "that peasants should learn Latin," see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 105.]

Force, Fortitude, and Fortune. I wish you to know the meaning of those three words accurately.

"Force" (in humanity), means power of doing good work. A fool, or a corpse, can do any quantity of mischief; but only a wise and strong man, or, with what true vital force there is in him, a weak one, can do good.

"Fortitude" means the power of bearing necessary pain, or trial of patience, whether by time, or temptation.

"Fortune" means the necessary fate of a man: the ordinance of his life which cannot be changed. To "make your fortune" is to rule that appointed fate to the best ends of which it is capable.

Fors is a feminine word; and Clavigera, is, therefore, the feminine of "Claviger."

Clava means a club. Clavis, a key. Clavus, a nail, or a rudder.

Gero means "I carry." It is the root of our word "gesture" (the way you carry yourself); and, in a curious bye-way, of "jest."

Clavigera may mean, therefore, either Club-bearer, Key-bearer, or Nail-bearer.

Each of these three possible meanings of Clavigera corresponds to one of the three meanings of Fors.

Fors, the Club-bearer, means the strength of Hercules, or of Deed.

Fors, the Key-bearer, means the strength of Ulysses, or of Patience.

Fors, the Nail-bearer, means the strength of Lycurgus, or of Law.

I will tell you what you may usefully know of those three Greek persons in a little time.[1] At present, note only of the three powers: 1. That the strength of Hercules is for deed, not misdeed; and that his club—the favourite

[1] [To Hercules and Ulysses Ruskin did not, however, return in *Fors Clavigera* (though there are incidental references to the former in Letters 79 and 82, Vol. XXIX. pp. 150, 251); nor, in telling the story of Theseus does he say how the hero helped Hercules (as recounted by Euripides: see below, p. 430 *n.*). To Lycurgus Ruskin returns in Letters 27, § 14 (p. 502), and 68, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 667).]

weapon, also, of the Athenian hero Theseus,[1] whose form is the best inheritance left to us by the greatest of Greek sculptors (it is in the Elgin room of the British Museum, and I shall have much to tell you of him—especially how he helped Hercules in his utmost need, and how he invented mixed vegetable soup[2])—was for subduing monsters and cruel persons, and was of olive-wood.[3] 2. That the Second Fors Clavigera is portress at a gate which she cannot open till you have waited long; and that her robe is of the colour of ashes, or dry earth.* 3. That the third Fors Clavigera, the power of Lycurgus, is Royal † as well as Legal; and that the notablest crown yet existing in Europe of any that have been worn by Christian kings, was—people say—made of a Nail.[4]

3. That is enough about my title, for this time; now to our work. I told you,[5] and you will find it true, that, practically, all wages mean the food and lodging given you by the possessors of the land.

It begins to be asked on many sides how the possessors of the land became possessed of it, and why they should still possess it, more than you or I; and Ricardo's "Theory"

* See Cary's translation of the ninth book of Dante's *Purgatory*, line 106.[6]

† Observe generally, "Royalty" means rule of any kind; "Monarchy" rule by a single person; "Kingship" rule by an able and wise person.—[*Author's addition under the word "Royalty" in his Index to Vols. I. and II.*]

[1] [For the club of Theseus, see below, p. 396 *n.*; for the Elgin marble, called "Theseus," see Plate X.]

[2] [For the story of the vegetable soup, see below, p. 429 *n.*]

[3] [Ruskin in one of his copies here wrote in the margin, "Explain Alcmena and Rhadamanthus, connection with Minos." He thus notes as significant that the mother of Hercules should have married the rewarding judge, Rhadamanthus, who is distinguished from Minos, the tormenting judge, brutal and rabid: see "The Tortoise of Ægina," § 8 (Vol. XX. p. 383). For Hercules, see further *Queen of the Air*, § 4 (Vol. XIX. p. 298); for his club of olive-wood, see Pausanias ii. 31, 10.]

[4] [For another reference to the Iron Crown of Lombardy (in which the fillet of iron which lines the diadem is said to have been hammered from one of the nails used at the Crucifixion), see Vol. XX. p. 363.]

[5] [Letter 1, § 12 (above, p. 23).]

[6] ["Ashes, or earth ta'en dry out of the ground,
Were of one colour with the robe he wore." (Cary.)

The passage is from the description of the angel deputed by St. Peter to keep the gate of Purgatory. For Ruskin's description here of Patience as portress at the gate of Art and Promise, see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 33 (Vol. XIX. pp. 85–86).]

extending his own business? If he ceased buying the lace, for the sake of employing more cloth-makers, would there not be simply a transfer of the £50 from the lace-makers to the cloth-makers? In order to find the right answer to these questions, let us imagine what would actually take place if the manufacturer ceased buying the lace, and employed the £50 in paying the wages of an additional number of cloth-makers. The lace manufacturer, in consequence of the diminished demand for lace, would diminish the production, and would withdraw from his business an amount of capital corresponding to the diminished demand. As there is no reason to suppose that the lace-maker would, on losing some of his custom, become more extravagant, or would cease to desire to derive income from the capital which the diminished demand has caused him to withdraw from his own business, it may be assumed that he would invest this capital in some other industry. This capital is not the same as that which his former customer, the woollen cloth manufacturer, is now paying his own labourers with; it is a second capital; and in the place of £50 employed in maintaining labour, there is now £100 so employed. There is no transfer from lace-makers to cloth-makers. There is fresh employment for the cloth-makers, and a transfer from the lace-makers to some other labourers."—*Principles of Political Economy*, vol. i. p. 102.[1]

7. This is very fine; and it is clear that we may carry forward the improvement in our commercial arrangements by recommending all the other customers of the lace-maker to treat him as the cloth-maker has done. Whereupon he of course leaves the lace business entirely, and uses all his capital in "some other industry." Having thus established the lace-maker with a complete "second capital," in the other industry, we will next proceed to develop a capital out of the cloth-maker, by recommending all *his* customers to leave *him*. Whereupon, he will also invest his capital in "some other industry," and we have a Third capital, employed in the National benefit.

We will now proceed in the round of all possible businesses, developing a correspondent number of new capitals, till we come back to our friend the lace-maker again, and find him employed in whatever his new industry was. By now taking away again all his new customers, we begin the development of another order of Capitals in a higher Seraphic circle—and so develop at last an Infinite Capital!

8. It would be difficult to match this for simplicity; it

[1] [*i.e.*, summarised by Mrs. Fawcett from Mill's *Principles* (see note on next page).]

is more comic even than the fable of James and William,[1] though you may find it less easy to detect the fallacy here; but the obscurity is not because the error is less gross, but because it is threefold. Fallacy 1st is the assumption that a cloth-maker may employ any number of men, whether he has customers or not; while a lace-maker must dismiss his men if he has not customers. Fallacy 2nd: That when a lace-maker can no longer find customers for lace, he can always find customers for something else. Fallacy 3rd (the essential one): That the funds provided by these new customers, produced seraphically from the clouds, are a "second capital." Those customers, if they exist now, existed before the lace-maker adopted his new business; and were the employers of the people in that business. If the lace-maker gets them, he merely diverts their fifty pounds from the tradesman they were before employing, to himself; and that is Mr. Mill's "second capital."

9. Underlying these three fallacies, however, there is, in the mind of "the greatest thinker in England,"[2] some consciousness of a partial truth, which he has never yet been able to define for himself—still less to explain to others. The real root of them is his conviction that it is beneficial and profitable to make broadcloth; and unbeneficial and unprofitable to make lace;* so that the trade of cloth-making should be infinitely extended, and that of lace-making infinitely repressed. Which is, indeed, partially true. Making

* I assume the Cambridge quotation to be correct: in my old edition (1848), the distinction is between "weavers and lace-makers" and "journeymen bricklayers"; and making velvet is considered to be the production of a "commodity," but building a house only doing a "service."[3]

[1] [See Letter 1, §§ 13, 14 (pp. 24–25).]

[2] [Ruskin had picked up this description of Mill (cited again at pp. 64–65) from some book or paper of the time: see his letter to Professor Norton of September 12, 1869 (in a later volume of this edition). See also Froude's *Carlyle's Life in London*, vol. ii. p. 420, where Carlyle, in connexion with Mill's *Autobiography*, writes of "the cock-a-leerie crow about 'the Great Thinker of his Age.'"]

[3] [The passage in Mrs. Fawcett's *Political Economy for Beginners* (called by Ruskin "the Cambridge Catechism") is not a quotation, but a summary of Mill's argument with a different illustration. The passage in Mill is in book i. ch. v. § 9: "A consumer may expend his income either in buying services or commodities. He may employ part of it in hiring journeymen bricklayers to build a house . . . , or, instead of this, he may expend the same value in buying velvet and lace."]

cloth, if it be well made, is a good industry; and if you had sense enough to read your Walter Scott thoroughly, I should invite you to join me in sincere hope that Glasgow might in that industry long flourish; and the chief hostelry at Aberfoil be at the sign of the "Nicol Jarvie."[1] Also, of lace-makers, it is often true that they had better be doing something else. I admit it, with no good will, for I know a most kind lady, a clergyman's wife, who devotes her life to the benefit of her country by employing lace-makers; and all her friends make presents of collars and cuffs to each other, for the sake of charity; and as, if they did not, the poor girl lace-makers would probably indeed be "diverted" into some other less diverting industry, in due assertion of the rights of women (cartridge-filling, or percussion-cap making, most likely), I even go the length, sometimes, of furnishing my friend with a pattern, and never say a word to disturb her young customers in their conviction that it is an act of Christian charity to be married in more than ordinarily expensive veils.

10. But there *is* one kind of lace for which I should be glad that the demand ceased. Iron lace. If we must even doubt whether ornamental thread-work may be, wisely, made on cushions in the sunshine, by dexterous fingers for fair shoulders,—how are we to think of Ornamental Iron-work, made with deadly sweat of men, and steady waste, all summer through, of the coals that Earth gave us for winter fuel? What shall we say of labour spent on lace such as that?

Nay, says the Cambridge catechism, "the demand for commodities is not a demand for labour."[2]

[1] [The first draft reads, ". . . flourish, at the sign of the Golden Nicol Jarvie instead of the Golden Fleece." For Nicol Jarvie, a weaver like his father the deacon before him, and his adventures at the Clachan of Aberfoil, where he gets hung up by the skirts of his riding coat, "not unlike to the sign of the Golden Fleece over the door of the Trongate of his native city" (Glasgow), see *Rob Roy*, chaps. xxix., xxx. The "Bailie Nicol Jarvie" is now the chief inn at Aberfoil. Glasgow, long famous for its looms—though for cotton rather than cloth—has for its motto "Let Glasgow Flourish."]

[2] [The first draft of the letter continues differently from this point:—

"Cast iron is no commodity, then? Presumably,—an Incommodity? It may be; but the demand for any product is assuredly demand for the

Doubtless, in the economist's new earth, cast iron will be had for asking: the hapless and brave Parisians find it even rain occasionally out of the new economical Heavens, *without* asking. Gold will also one day, perhaps, be begotten of gold, until the supply of that, as well as of iron, may be, at least, equal to the demand. But, in this world, it is not so yet. Neither thread-lace, gold-lace, iron-lace, nor stone-lace, whether they be commodities or incommodities, can be had for nothing. How much, think you, did the gilded flourishes cost round the gas-lamps on Westminster Bridge? or the stone-lace of the pinnacles of the temple of Parliament at the end of it (incommodious enough, as I hear); or the point-lace of the park-railings

labour of its production, and the demand for an incommodious product is too often the demand for incommodious production. I had once a pleasant walk through the fields from the bottom of Herne Hill to Dulwich. The path is now divided from the grass (what grass is left, it being now mostly covered with broken bottles and brickbats) by a beautiful iron railing, and a railroad crosses it, high on arches, every pier of which is decorated with a piece of cast-iron lace, woven into this pattern. You suppose you have benefited greatly, my working friends, by your employment in those productions. And it is very necessary for you workmen to know the exact process and economical result of the manufacture of cast-iron lace (lace of wrought iron I hope to see you again at work on some day, in good smiths' forges, well open to the air; here is a little bit of it of old days in Verona). Of that afterwards. It is our present method of operation, and the profits of it to body and soul which I have to explain, reducing, as I have told you it is always needful to do, the facts to a small scale that you may see the accurate gist of them.

"We had James and William for our last 'position'; we will have Tom and Harry for this.

"Tom and Harry are two farmers, farming each their four or five hundred acres on opposite sides of a trout stream. They can pay the squire his rent without much trouble, and they and their labourers have enough to live on, fresh air to breathe, pure water to drink, blackberry hedges for field fences, and palings to keep in the pigs and other unruly creatures.

"Some blessed day the Capitalist arrives and announces to them the approach of the millennium.

"He buys another bit of land from the squire, digs a pit in it a thousand feet deep, builds a chimney on it four hundred feet high, kills all the trout in the stream, and keeps most of the water of it for boiling, and is ready for business. First, he must persuade Harry that he should pull down his barns and build greater, in the hope of getting Tom's custom at the market town as well as his own. Next, he also persuades Harry that he should cast his initials and the date of this event in iron, and decorate his barn walls with many of them, lest perchance the London holiday makers should call him 'Arry instead of Harry, or be ignorant of the precise epoch of the enlargement of his barns.

"Harry is greatly pleased at this prospect of advance towards the millennium, and is ready to buy iron Hs and 1871s to any extent, paying, of

which you so improperly pulled down, when you wanted to be Parliamentary yourselves[1] (much good you would have got of that!); or the "openwork" of iron railings generally—the special glories of English design? Will you count the cost, in labour and coals, of the blank bars ranged along all the melancholy miles of our suburban streets, saying with their rusty tongues, as plainly as iron tongues can speak, "Thieves outside, and nothing to steal within"?[2] A beautiful wealth they are! and a productive capital! "Well, but," you answer, "the making them was work for us." Of course it was; is not that the very thing I am telling you? Work it was; and too much. But will you be good enough to make up your minds, once for all, whether it is really work that you want, or rest? I thought you rather objected to your quantity of work;—that you were all for having eight hours of it instead of ten? You may have twelve instead of ten, easily,—sixteen,

course, in kind (the Cambridge Catechism very properly supposes this) a quantity of that year's corn.

"Next, the Seraphic Doctor advises Tom that his pigs, being more than usually progressive pigs, require to be kept in with iron railings having gilded points to them.

"Tom anticipating that this cannot but greatly raise the price of pork, and conceiving the millennium essentially to mean dear pork, is immediately ready to purchase dear pork, any quantity of iron railings, with a quantity of this last year's best bacon.

"Then the Seraphic Doctor informs the farm labourers generally (who were sometimes a little hard put to it, even in their days of ignorance) that his pit and chimney are protoplasmic means of the production of bread and bacon, and that he can give them any quantity if they will come and make iron railings and iron Hs.

"Whereupon the chimney begins to smoke to purpose, and the new barns are built, and the pigs have an æsthetic sty, and the pitmen have unlimited bread and bacon, and become refined characters accordingly. The Seraphic Doctor keeps 50 per cent. of bread and bacon for himself, as the just reward of ingenuity in a celestial state, and everybody wonders how it was possible to exist in pre-millennial periods. The old and infirm farm labourers and their children nevertheless feel that there's a pinch somewhere, and that there seems to them practically a deficiency in bacon, but that, no doubt, is because reform is wanted in Parliament, and because in pre-millennial times the women didn't work as well as the men. So the women go to work in the fields, by way of claiming their rights, and once get reform in Parliament, and a few more pits and chimneys—and we shall see!"]

[1] [For a reference to this incident of the Parliamentary Reform agitation of 1866, see Vol. XVII. p. lxxx. See also Letters 10, § 16, and 27, § 5 (pp. 176, 493).]

[2] [Compare *Two Paths*, § 163 (Vol. XVI. p. 387); *Crown of Wild Olive*, §§ 2, 5 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 387, 389); and below, p. 43. See also the letter printed in Appendix 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 531).]

if you like! If it is only occupation you want, why do you cast the iron? Forge it in the fresh air, on a workman's anvil; make iron-lace like this of Verona,[1]—every link of it swinging loose like a knight's chain mail: then you may have some joy of it afterwards, and pride; and say you knew the cunning of a man's right hand.[2] But I think it is pay that you want, not work; and it is very true that pretty iron-work like that does not pay; but it *is* pretty, and it might even be entertaining, if you made those leaves at the top of it (which are, as far as I can see, only artichoke, and not very well done) in the likeness of all the beautiful leaves you could find, till you knew them all by heart. "Wasted time and hammer-strokes," say you? "A wise people like the English will have nothing but spikes; and, besides, the spikes are highly needful, so many of the wise people being thieves." Yes, that is so; and, therefore, in calculating the annual cost of keeping your thieves, you must always reckon, not only the cost of the spikes that keep them in, but of the spikes that keep them out. But how if, instead of flat rough spikes, you put triangular polished ones, commonly called bayonets; and instead of the perpendicular bars, put perpendicular men? What is the cost to you then, of your railing, of which you must feed the idle bars daily? Costly enough, if it stays quiet. But how, if it begin to march and countermarch? and apply its spikes horizontally?[3]

*Fig.* 1

[1] [For Ruskin's account of his drawing of this ironwork (on the tomb of Can Signorio della Scala), see Vol. XIX. p. liii. See also Plate B in Vol. XI. p. 90; and on the beauty of Veronese ironwork generally, Vol. VIII. p. 85 *n.*, and Vol. X. p. 289.]

[2] [Psalms cxxxvii. 5.]

[3] ["*Cf.* Cannon, Letter 1, § 9" (p. 21).—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

11. And now note this that follows; it is of vital importance to you.

There are, practically, two absolutely opposite kinds of labour going on among men, for ever.*

The first, labour supported by Capital, producing nothing.

The second, labour unsupported by Capital, producing all things.

Take two simple and precise instances on a small scale.

12. A little while since, I was paying a visit in Ireland,[1] and chanced to hear an account of the pleasures of a picnic party, who had gone to see a waterfall. There was of course ample lunch, feasting on the grass, and basketsful of fragments taken up afterwards.

Then the company, feeling themselves dull, gave the fragments that remained to the attendant ragged boys, on condition that they should "pull each other's hair."

Here, you see, is, in the most accurate sense, employment of food, or capital, in the support of entirely unproductive labour.

13. Next, for the second kind. I live at the top of a short but rather steep hill;[2] at the bottom of which, every day, all the year round, but especially in frost, coal-waggons get stranded, being economically provided with the smallest number of horses that can get them along on level ground.

The other day, when the road, frozen after thaw, was at the worst, my assistant,[3] the engraver of that bit of ironwork on the previous page, was coming up here, and found three coal-waggons at a lock, helpless; the drivers, as usual, explaining Political Economy to the horses, by beating them over the heads.

* I do not mean that there are no other kinds, nor that well-paid labour must necessarily be unproductive. I hope to see much done, some day, for just pay, and wholly productive. But these, named in the text, are the two opposite extremes; and, in actual life, hitherto, the largest means have been usually spent in mischief, and the most useful work done for the worst pay.

[1] [In 1868: see Vol. XIX. p. xxxviii.]

[2] [Ruskin had not yet left Denmark Hill for Brantwood.]

[3] [For a notice of Ruskin's assistant, Arthur Burgess, see Vol. XIV. pp. 349–356. See also, below, p. 112 *n.*]

There were half-a-dozen fellows besides, out of work, or not caring to be in it—standing by, looking on. My engraver put his shoulder to a wheel (at least his hand to a spoke), and called on the idlers to do as much. They didn't seem to have thought of such a thing, but were ready enough when called on. "And we went up screaming," said Mr. Burgess.

Do you suppose that was one whit less proper human work than going up a hill against a battery, merely because, in that case, half of the men would have gone down, screaming, instead of up; and those who got up would have done no good at the top?

14. But observe the two opposite kinds of labour. The first lavishly supported by Capital, and producing Nothing. The second, unsupported by any Capital whatsoever,—not having so much as a stick for a tool,—but called, by mere goodwill, out of the vast void of the world's Idleness, and producing the definitely profitable result of moving a weight of fuel some distance towards the place where it was wanted, and sparing the strength of overloaded creatures.

Observe further. The labour producing no useful result was demoralizing. All such labour is.

The labour producing useful result was educational in its influence on the temper. All such labour is.

15. And the first condition of education, the thing you are all crying out for,[1] is being put to wholesome and useful work. And it is nearly the last conditions of it, too; you need very little more; but, as things go, there will yet be difficulty in getting that. As things have hitherto gone, the difficulty has been to avoid getting the reverse of that.

16. For, during the last eight hundred years, the upper classes of Europe have been one large Picnic Party. Most of them have been religious also; and in sitting down, by companies, upon the green grass,[2] in parks, gardens, and the

[1] [Compare, below, pp. 60-61, 211. Mr. Forster's Education Act had been the principal measure of the previous Session (1870). For "wholesome and useful work" as the first duty of life, see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 135 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 181-182).]

[2] [Mark vi. 39.]

like, have considered themselves commanded into that position by Divine authority, and fed with bread from Heaven: of which they duly considered it proper to bestow the fragments in support, and the tithes in tuition, of the poor.

17. But, without even such small cost, they might have taught the poor many beneficial things. In some places they *have* taught them manners, which is already much. They might have cheaply taught them merriment also:—dancing and singing, for instance. The young English ladies who sit nightly to be instructed, themselves, at some cost, in melodies illustrative of the consumption of La Traviata, and the damnation of Don Juan, might have taught every girl peasant in England to join in costless choirs of innocent song.[1] Here and there, perhaps, a gentleman might have been found able to teach his peasantry some science and art. Science and fine art don't pay; but they cost little. Tithes—not of the income of the country, but of the income, say, of its brewers—nay, probably the sum devoted annually by England to provide drugs for the adulteration of its own beer,—would have founded lovely little museums, and perfect libraries, in every village. And if here and there an English churchman had been found (such as Dean Stanley[2]) willing to explain to peasants the sculpture of his and their own cathedral, and to read its black-letter inscriptions for them; and, on warm Sundays, when they were too sleepy to attend to anything more proper—to tell them a story about some of the people who had built it, or lay buried in it—we perhaps might have been quite as religious as we are, and yet need not now have been offering prizes for competition in art schools, nor lecturing with tender sentiment on the inimitableness of the works of Fra Angelico.

[1] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 391).]

[2] ["It was Stanley's delight to take parties of working-men over the Abbey on Saturday evenings, and afterwards to provide them with tea in the Jerusalem Chamber. 'These parties appear to me,' he says, 'one of the most useful purposes to which the Abbey can be turned'" (see R. E. Prothero's *Life and Correspondence of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley*, 1893, vol. ii. pp. 310 *seq.*).]

These things the great Picnic Party might have taught without cost, and with amusement to themselves. One thing, at least, they were bound to teach, whether it amused them or not;—how, day by day, the daily bread they expected their village children to pray to God for, might be earned in accordance with the laws of God. *This* they might have taught, not only without cost, but with great gain. One thing only they *have* taught, and at considerable cost.

18. They have spent four hundred millions* of pounds here in England within the last twenty years!—how much in France and Germany, I will take some pains to ascertain for you,[1]—and with this initial outlay of capital, have taught the peasants of Europe—to pull each other's hair.[2]

With *this* result, 17th January, 1871, at and around the chief palace of their own pleasures, and the chief city of their delights:—

"Each demolished house has its own legend of sorrow, of pain, and horror; each vacant doorway speaks to the eye, and almost to the ear, of hasty flight, as armies or fire came—of weeping women and trembling children running away in awful fear, abandoning the home that saw their birth, the old house they loved—of startled men seizing quickly under each arm their most valued goods, and rushing, heavily laden, after their wives and babes, leaving to hostile hands the task of burning all the rest. When evening falls, the wretched outcasts, worn with fatigue and tears, reach Versailles, St. Germain, or some other place outside the range of fire, and there they beg for bread and shelter, homeless, foodless, broken with despair. And this, remember, has been the fate of something like a hundred thousand people during the last four months. Versailles alone has about fifteen thousand such fugitives to keep alive, all ruined, all hopeless, all vaguely asking the grim future what still worse fate it may have in store for them." —*Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 17th, 1871.

* £992,740,328, in seventeen years, say the working-men of Burnley, in their address just issued—an excellent address in its way, and full of very fair arithmetic—if its facts are all right; only I don't see, myself, how, "from fifteen to twenty-five millions per annum," make nine hundred and ninety-two millions in seventeen years.

[1] [This, however, was not done; but for some figures of the kind at an earlier date, see *Time and Tide*, § 17 (Vol. XVII. p. 331), and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 28 (Vol. XVIII. p. 408).]

[2] ["Cost of war. Compare Letters 4, § 11; 6, § 9; 37, § 16" (pp. 74, 107, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 29).—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

19. This is the result round their pleasant city, and *this* within their industrious and practical one: let us keep, for the reference of future ages, a picture of domestic life, out of the streets of London in her commercial prosperity, founded on the eternal laws of Supply and Demand, as applied by the modern Capitalist:—

"A father in the last stage of consumption — two daughters nearly marriageable with hardly sufficient rotting clothing to 'cover their shame.' The rags that hang around their attenuated frames flutter in strips against their naked legs. They have no stool or chair upon which they can sit. Their father occupies the only stool in the room. They have no employment by which they can earn even a pittance. They are at home starving on a half-chance meal a day, and hiding their raggedness from the world. The walls are bare, there is one bed in the room, and a bundle of dirty rags are upon it. The dying father will shortly follow the dead mother; and when the parish coffin encloses his wasted form, and a pauper's grave closes above him, what shall be his daughters' lot? This is but a type of many other homes in the district: dirt, misery, and disease alone flourish in that wretched neighbourhood. 'Fever and smallpox rage,' as the inhabitants say, 'next door, and next door, and over the way, and next door to that, and further down.' The living, dying, and dead are all huddled together. The houses have no ventilation, the back yards are receptacles for all sorts of filth and rubbish, the old barrels or vessels that contain the supply of water are thickly coated on the sides with slime, and there is an undisturbed deposit of mud at the bottom. There is no mortuary house—the dead lie in the dogholes where they breathed their last, and add to the contagion which spreads through the neighbourhood."—*Pall Mall Gazette*, January 7th, 1871, quoting the *Builder*.[1]

20. As I was revising this sheet,—on the evening of the 20th of last month,—two slips of paper were brought to me. One contained, in consecutive paragraphs, an extract from the speech of one of the best and kindest of our public men,[2] to the "Liberal Association" at Portsmouth; and an account of the performances of the 85-ton gun

[1] [Compare, with this account from Wapping, the similar one from Spitalfields in *Sesame and Lilies*, § 36 (Vol. XVIII. p. 91).]

[2] [The Right Hon. William Francis Cowper (1811–1888); assumed the name Cowper-Temple on inheriting the estates of his step-father, Lord Palmerston (1869); created Baron Mount-Temple in 1880. M.P. for Hertford (1835–1868), for South Hampshire (1868–1880); Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, 1857–1858; First Commissioner of Works, 1860–1866; responsible for the "Cowper-Temple Clause" in the Education Act of 1870. Married in 1848, Georgiana, daughter of Vice-Admiral J. R. D. Tollemache. For Ruskin's friendship with her and her husband, see Vol. XXIV. p. xxi. Mr. Cowper-Temple presently accepted the Trusteeship of the St. George's Fund: see below, pp. 141, 159.]

called the "Woolwich infant,"[1] which is fed with 700-pound shot, and 180 pounds of gunpowder at one mouthful; not at all like the Wapping infants, starving on a half-chance meal a day. "The gun was fired with the most satisfactory result," nobody being hurt, and nothing damaged but the platform, while the shot passed through the screens in front at the rate of 1808 feet per second: and it seems, also, that the Woolwich infant has not seen the light too soon. For Mr. Cowper-Temple, in the preceding paragraph, informs the Liberals of Portsmouth, that in consequence of our amiable neutrality "we must contemplate the contingency of a combined fleet coming from the ports of Prussia, Russia, and America, and making an attack on England."[2]

21. Contemplating myself these relations of Russia, Prussia, Woolwich, and Wapping, it seems to my uncommercial mind merely like another case of iron railings—thieves outside, and nothing to steal within.[3] But the second slip of paper announced approaching help in a peaceful direction. It was the prospectus of the Boardmen's and General Advertising Co-operative Society, which invites, from the "generosity of the public, a necessary small preliminary sum," and, "in addition to the above, a small sum of money by way of capital," to set the members of the society up in the profitable business of walking about London between two boards.[4] Here *is* at last found for us, then, it appears, a line of life! At the West End, lounging about the streets, with a well-made back to one's coat, and front to one's shirt, is usually thought of as not much in the way of business; but, doubtless, to lounge at the East

[1] [The "Woolwich Infant"—then the largest gun ever made, length 16 ft. 3 in., weight 35 tons, formed of a steel tube with coiled breech-piece; designed to fire a 700-lb. projectile with 120-lb. charge. Made at Woolwich in 1870. When tried at Woolwich in December 1871 the inner tube cracked. Others were made in 1872. For other references to it, see below, pp. 142, 266; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 95, 153; and Vol. XXIX. p. 17.]

[2] [A fuller report of Mr. Cowper-Temple's speech to his constituents may be read in the *Times* of January 20, 1871; for another reference to it, see below, p. 186.]

[3] [See above, p. 36.]

[4] ["*Cf.* Letter 3, § 5" (p. 49).—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

End about the streets, with one Lie pinned to the front of you, and another to the back of you, will pay, in time, only with proper preliminary expenditure of capital. My friends, I repeat my question: Do you not think you could contrive some little method of employing—yourselves? for truly I think the Seraphic Doctors are nearly at their wits' end (if ever their wits had a beginning). Tradesmen are beginning to find it difficult to live by lies of their own; and workmen will not find it much easier to live, by walking about, flattened between other people's.

22. Think over it. On the first of March, I hope to ask you to read a little history with me; perhaps also, because the world's time, seen truly, is but one long and fitful April, in which every day is All Fools' day,—we may continue our studies in that month; but on the first of May, you shall consider with me what you can do, or let me, if still living, tell you what I know you can do—those of you, at least, who will promise—(with the help of the three strong Fates) these three things:—

(1.) To do your own work well, whether it be for life or death.

(2.) To help other people at theirs, when you can, and seek to avenge no injury.

(3.) To be sure you can obey good laws before you seek to alter bad ones.[1]

Believe me,
Your faithful friend,
JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] ["St. George's vow; see Letter 5, §§ 19–21" (pp. 95, 96).—*MS. note in Author's copy.* See also Letter 7, §§ 16–20 (pp. 129 *seq.*), and Letter 62, §§ 7, 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 517); and for (1), below, pp. 116, 347, and Vol. XXVIII. pp. 147, 767; for (3), below, p. 178, and Letter 74, § 15 (Vol. XXIX. p. 45).]

## LETTER 8

### RICHARD OF ENGLAND[1]

DENMARK HILL,
*1st March*, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—We are to read—with your leave—some history to-day; the leave, however, will perhaps not willingly be given, for you may think that of late you have read enough history, or too much, in *Gazettes* of morning and evening. No; you have read, and can read, no history in these. Reports of daily events, yes;—and if any journal would limit itself to statements of well-sifted fact, making itself not a "news"paper, but an "olds"paper, and giving its statements tested and true, like old wine, as soon as things could be known accurately; choosing also, of the many things that might be known, those which it was most vital to know, and summing them in few words of pure English,—I cannot say whether it would ever pay well to sell it; but I am sure it would pay well to read it, and to read no other.[2]

But even so, to know only what was happening day by day, would not be to read history. What happens now is but the momentary scene of a great play, of which you can understand nothing without some knowledge of the former action. And of that, so great a play is it, you can at best understand little; yet of history, as of science, a little, well known, will serve you much, and a little, ill known, will do you fatally the contrary of service.

[1] [See below, § 10. Discarded titles for this letter were "English Ghosts and their Land" and "The Haunted Land" (see below, § 8).]

[2] [Compare Ruskin's letter of June 1887 on "The Function of the *Pall Mall Gazette*" (reprinted in a later volume of this edition); and Vol. XXVIII. pp. 20, 26.]

No such harvest is sowing for you,—Freemen and Independent Electors of Parliamentary representatives, as you think yourselves.

4. Freemen, indeed! You are slaves, not to masters of any strength or honour; but to the idlest talkers at that floral end of Westminster Bridge.[1] Nay, to countless meaner masters than they. For though, indeed, as early as the year 1102, it was decreed in a council at St. Peter's, Westminster, "that no man for the future should presume to carry on the wicked trade of selling men in the markets, like brute beasts, which hitherto hath been the common custom of England,"[2] the no less wicked trade of *under*-selling men in markets has lasted to this day; producing conditions of slavery differing from the ancient ones only in being starved instead of full-fed: and besides this, a state of slavery unheard of among the nations till now, has arisen with us. In all former slaveries, Egyptian, Algerine, Saxon, and American, the slave's complaint has been of compulsory *work*. But the modern Politico-Economic slave is a new and far more injured species, condemned to Compulsory *Idleness*, for fear he should spoil other people's trade; the beautifully logical condition of the national Theory of Economy in this matter being that, if you are a shoemaker, it is a law of Heaven that you must sell your goods under their price, in order to destroy the trade of other shoemakers; but if you are not a shoemaker, and are going shoeless and lame, it is a law of Heaven that you must not cut yourself a bit of cowhide, to put between your foot and the stones, because that would interfere with the total trade of shoemaking.

Which theory, of all the wonderful—!

. . . . . .

5. We will wait till April to consider of it;[3] meantime,

[1] [See Letter 2, § 10 (p. 35).]

[2] [See *The History of Great Britain*, by Robert Henry, book iii. ch. vi. (vol. iii. p. 520, 1777). For Ruskin's opinion, and use, of Henry's history, see Letter 25, § 11 (p. 457).]

[3] [See Letter 4, § 11 (p. 75).]

here is a note I have received from Mr. Alsager A. Hill, who having been unfortunately active in organizing that new effort in the advertising business, designed, as it seems, on this loveliest principle of doing nothing that will be perilously productive—was hurt by my manner of mention of it in the last number of *Fors*.[1] I offered accordingly to print any form of remonstrance he would furnish me with, if laconic enough; and he writes to me,

"The intention of the Boardmen's Society is not, as the writer of *Fors Clavigera* suggests, to 'find a line of life' for able-bodied labourers, but simply, by means of co-operation, to give them the fullest benefit of their labour whilst they continue a very humble but still remunerative calling. See Rule 12. The capital asked for to start the organization is essential in all industrial partnerships, and in so poor a class of labour as that of street board-carrying could not be supplied by the men themselves. With respect to the 'lies' alleged to be carried in front and behind, it is rather hard measure to say that mere announcements of public meetings or places of entertainments (of which street notices chiefly consist) are necessarily falsehoods."

To which, I have only to reply that I never said the newly-found line of life was meant for able-bodied persons. The distinction between able and unable-bodied men is entirely indefinite. There are all degrees of ability for all things; and a man who can do anything, however little, should be made to do that little usefully. If you can carry about a board with a bill on it, you can carry, not about, but where it is wanted, a board *without* a bill on it; which is a much more useful exercise of your ability. Respecting the general probity, and historical or descriptive accuracy, of advertisements, and their function in modern economy, I will inquire in another place.[2] You see I use none for this book, and shall in future use none for any of my books; having grave objection even to the very small minority of advertisements which are approximately true. I am correcting this sheet in the "Crown and Thistle" inn

[1] [See Letter 2, § 21 (p. 43).]

[2] [See Letter 21, §§, 2, 3 (pp. 352–353). For his refusal to advertise *Fors*, see the announcement, p. 11 *n*. Ruskin never advertised any press opinions of his books, after Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. ceased to publish them; and for many years he did not allow Mr. Allen to announce their publication in the newspapers.]

which the map has remained unchanged for so long? I believe you would care more for her, and less for yourselves, except as her faithful children, if you knew a little more about her; and especially more of what she has been. The difficulty, indeed, at any time, is in finding out what she has been; for that which people usually call her history is not hers at all; but that of her Kings, or the tax-gatherers employed by them, which is as if people were to call Mr. Gladstone's history, or Mr. Lowe's,[1] yours and mine.

9. But the history even of her Kings is worth reading. You remember, I said, that sometimes in church it might keep you awake to be told a little of it.[2] For a simple instance, you have heard probably of Absalom's rebellion against his father, and of David's agony at his death, until from very weariness you have ceased to feel the power of the story.[3] You would not feel it less vividly if you knew that a far more fearful sorrow, of the like kind, had happened to one of your own Kings, perhaps the best we have had, take him for all in all.[4] Not one only, but three of his sons, rebelled against *him*, and were urged into rebellion by their mother.[5] The Prince, who should have been King after him, was pardoned, not once, but many times—pardoned wholly, with rejoicing over him as over the dead alive, and set at his father's right hand in the kingdom; but all in vain. Hard and treacherous to the heart's core, nothing wins him, nothing warns, nothing binds. He flies to France, and wars at last alike against father and brother, till, falling sick through mingled guilt, and shame, and rage, he repents idly as the fever-fire withers him. His father sends him the signet-ring from his finger in token of one more forgiveness. The Prince lies down upon a heap of

[1] [Mr. Lowe being at this time, as Chancellor of the Exchequer (1868–1873), one of the best known and most criticised members of Mr. Gladstone's administration.]

[2] [See above, p. 40.]

[3] [2 Samuel xviii. 33.]

[4] [*Hamlet*, Act i. sc. 2.]

[5] [In these references to the rebellious sons of Henry II.—Henry (died 1182), Richard, and John—Ruskin quotes from Robert Henry's *History of Great Britain*, book iii. ch. i. § 3, vol. iii. pp. 124–125 132, 133.]

ashes with a halter round his neck, and so dies. When his father heard it he fainted away three times, and then broke out into bitterest crying and tears. This, you would have thought enough for the Third dark Fate to have appointed for a man's sorrows. It was little to that which was to come. His second son, who was now his Prince of England, conspired against him, and pursued his father from city to city, in Norman France. At last, even his youngest son, best beloved of all, abandoned him, and went over to his enemies.

This was enough. Between him and his children Heaven commanded its own peace. He sickened and died of grief on the 6th of July, 1189.[1]

The son who had killed him, "repented" now; but there could be no signet-ring sent to him. Perhaps the dead do not forgive. Men say, as he stood by his father's corpse, that the blood burst from his nostrils. One child only had been faithful to him, but he was the son of a girl whom he had loved much, and as he should not; his Queen, therefore, being a much older person, and strict upon proprieties, poisoned her; nevertheless poor Rosamond's son never failed him; won a battle for him in England, which, in all human probability, saved his kingdom; and was made a bishop, and turned out a bishop of the best.[2]

10. You know already a little about the Prince who stood unforgiven (as it seemed) by his father's body. He, also, had to forgive, in his time; but only a stranger's arrow shot—not those reversed "arrows in the hand of the giant,"[3] by which his father died. Men called him "Lion-heart," not untruly; and the English as a people, have

[1] [For a later reference to the story of Henry II. and his sons, see Letter 84, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 293).]

[2] [Geoffrey, Archbishop of York (died 1212), reputed son of Henry II. by 'Fair Rosamond"; took a prominent part in suppressing the northern rebellion of 1173–1174; made Bishop of Lincoln, 1173. For a critical account of the story of Rosamond Clifford, the mistress of Henry II. (who is said to have hidden her away from the Queen's jealousy at Woodstock: see below, p. 76), and the subject of many popular legends (such as the labyrinth and the poisoning by Queen Eleanor), see T. A. Archer's article in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.]

[3] [Psalms cxxvii. 4 (Prayer-book version).]

prided themselves somewhat ever since on having, every man of them, the heart of a lion; without inquiring particularly either what sort of heart a lion has, or whether to have the heart of a lamb might not sometimes be more to the purpose. But it so happens that the name was very justly given to this prince; and I want you to study his character somewhat, with me, because in all our history there is no truer representative of one great species of the British squire, under all the three significances of the name; for this Richard of ours was beyond most of his fellows, a Rider and a Shield-bearer; and beyond all men of his day, a Carver; and in disposition and *un*reasonable exercise of intellectual power, typically a Squire[1] altogether.[2]

11. Note of him first, then, that he verily desired the good of his people (provided it could be contrived without any check of his own humour), and that he saw his way to it a great deal clearer than any of your squires do now. Here are some of his laws for you:—

"Having set forth the great inconveniences arising from the diversity of weights and measures in different parts of the kingdom, he, by a law, commanded all measures of corn, and other dry goods, as also of liquors, to be exactly the same in all his dominions; and that the rim of each of these measures should be a circle of iron. By another law, he commanded all cloth to be woven two yards in breadth within the lists, and of equal goodness in all parts; and that all cloth which did not answer this description should be seized and burnt. He enacted, further, that all the coin of the kingdom should be exactly of the same weight and fineness;—that no Christian should take any interest for money lent; and, to prevent the extortions of the Jews, he commanded that all compacts between Christians and Jews should be made in the presence of witnesses, and the conditions of them put in writing."[3]

So, you see, in Cœur-de-Lion's day, it was not esteemed of absolute necessity to put agreements between *Christians* in writing! Which if it were not now, you know we might

[1] [Compare Letter 2, § 4 (p. 30).]

[2] ["Compare with this sketch, Sir Walter's entirely exhaustive definition of Sir Geoffrey Peveril, in Chapter I. of *Peveril of the Peak*."—*Author's Index to Vols. I. and II.* And for Richard I., as an English type, compare Vol. XXII. p. 497.]

[3] [*The History of Great Britain*, by Robert Henry, book iii. ch. vi. (vol. iii. p. 534). The original source, summarised by Henry, is the "Assize of Measures" (1197), given by Roger de Hoveden in his *Annals* (vol. ii. p. 410, Bohn's edition).]

save a great deal of money, and discharge some of our workmen round Temple Bar,[1] as well as from Woolwich Dockyards. Note also that bit about interest of money also for future reference. In the next place observe that this King had great objection to thieves—at least to any person whom he clearly comprehended to be a thief. He was the inventor of a mode of treatment which I believe the Americans—among whom it has not fallen altogether into disuse—do not gratefully enough recognize as a Monarchical institution. By the last of the laws for the government of his fleet in his expedition to Palestine, it is decreed, —"That whosoever is convicted of theft shall have his head shaved, melted pitch poured upon it, and the feathers from a pillow shaken over it, that he may be known; and shall be put on shore on the first land which the ship touches."[2] And not only so; he even objected to any theft by misrepresentation or deception,—for being evidently particularly interested, like Mr. Mill, in that cloth manufacture,[3] and having made the above law about the breadth of the web, which has caused it to be spoken of ever since as "Broad Cloth," and besides, for better preservation of its breadth, enacted that the Ell shall be of the same length all over the kingdom, and that it shall be made of iron —(so that Mr. Tennyson's provision for National defences—that every shop-boy should strike with his cheating yard-wand home,[4] would be mended much by the substitution of King Richard's *honest* ell-wand, and for once with advisable encouragement to the iron trade)—King Richard finally declares—"That it shall be of the same goodness in the middle as at the sides, and that no merchant in any part of the kingdom of England shall stretch before his shop or booth a red or black cloth, or any other thing by which

[1] [For other passages in which Ruskin refers to the labours of lawyers as superfluous, see Letters 1, 4, 16, 31 (pp. 17, 77, 280–284, 580), 44 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 135), and 84 (Vol. XXIX. p. 295). For his criticism upon standing armies, compare below, p. 185 *n.*]

[2] [*The History of Great Britain*, by Robert Henry, book iii. ch. vi. (vol. iii. p. 533).]

[3] [See Letter 2, § 6 (p. 31).]

[4] [*Maud*, Part I. 52.]

the sight of buyers is frequently deceived in the choice of good cloth."[1]

12. These being Richard's rough and unreasonable, chancing nevertheless, being wholly honest, to be wholly right, notions of business, the next point you are to note in him is his unreasonable good-humour; an eminent character of English Squires; a very lovable one; and available to himself and others in many ways, but not altogether so exemplary as many think it. If you are unscrupulously resolved, whenever you can get your own way, to take it; if you are in a position of life wherein you can get a good deal of it, and if you have pugnacity enough to enjoy fighting with anybody who will not give it to you, there is little reason why you should ever be out of humour, unless indeed your way is a broad one, wherein you are like to be opposed in force. Richard's way was a very narrow one. To be first in battle (generally obtaining that main piece of his will without question; once only worsted, by a French knight, and then not at all good-humouredly[2]), to be first in recognized command—therefore contending with his father, who was both in wisdom and acknowledged place superior; but scarcely contending at all with his brother John, who was as definitely and deeply beneath him; good-humoured unreasonably, while he was killing his father, the best of kings, and letting his brother rule unresisted, who was among the worst; and only proposing for his object in life to enjoy himself everywhere in a chivalrous, poetical, and pleasantly animal manner, as a strong man always may. What should he have been out of humour for? That he brightly and bravely lived through his captivity is much indeed to his honour; but it was his point of honour to be bright and brave; not at all to take care of his kingdom. A king

[1] [Not in Henry. The passage is translated from the same "Assize of Measures" cited on p. 54: see *Annals of Roger de Hoveden*, vol. ii. p. 411.]

[2] [The reference is to Richard's encounter with William de Barres (1191). The king was so enraged at being worsted that he said to the French knight, "Away with you hence, and take care that you never appear in my presence again, for at heart I shall for everlasting be the enemy of you and yours" (*Annals of Roger de Hoveden*, vol. ii. p. 192).]

who cared for that, would have got thinner and sadder in prison.

And it remains true of the English squire[1] to this day, that, for the most part, he thinks that his kingdom is given him that he may be bright and brave; and not at all that the sunshine or valour in him is meant to be of use to his kingdom.

18. But the next point you have to note in Richard is indeed a very noble quality, and true English; he always does as much of his work as he can with his own hands. He was not in any wise a king who would sit by a windmill to watch his son and his men at work, though brave kings have done so.[2] As much as might be, of whatever had to be done, he would steadfastly do from his own shoulder; his main tool being an old Greek one, and the working God Vulcan's—the clearing axe. When that was no longer needful, and nothing would serve but spade and trowel, still the king was foremost; and after the weary retreat to Ascalon, when he found the place "so completely ruined and deserted, that it afforded neither food, lodging, nor protection," nor any other sort of capital,—forthwith, 20th January, 1192—his army and he set to work to repair it; a three months' business, of incessant toil, "from which the king himself was not exempted, but wrought with greater ardour than any common labourer."[3]

14. The next point of his character is very English also, but less honourably so. I said but now that he had a great objection to anybody whom he clearly comprehended to be a thief. But he had great difficulty in reaching anything like an abstract definition of thieving, such as would include every method of it, and every culprit, which is an incapacity very common to many of us to this day. For instance, he carried off a great deal of treasure which belonged to his father, from Chinon (the royal treasury-town

[1] ["*Cf.* Letter 45."—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

[2] [The reference is to the stone windmill (the site of which is still pointed out) which Edward I. is said to have occupied at the Battle of Crécy.]

[3] [Henry, book iii. ch. i. § 4 (vol. iii. p. 149).]

in France), and fortified his own castles in Poictou with it;[1] and when he wanted money to go crusading with, sold the royal castles, manors, woods, and forests, and even the superiority of the Crown of England over the kingdom of Scotland, which his father had wrought hard for, for about a hundred thousand pounds.[2] Nay, the highest honours and most important offices become venal under him; and from a Princess's dowry to a Saracen caravan,[3] nothing comes much amiss; not but that he gives generously also; whole ships at a time when he is in the humour;[4] but his main practice is getting and spending, never saving; which covetousness is at last the death of him. For hearing that a considerable treasure of ancient coins and medals has been found in the lands of Vidomar, Viscount of Limoges, King Richard sends forthwith to claim this waif for himself.[5] The Viscount offers him part only, presumably having an antiquarian turn of mind. Whereupon Richard loses his temper, and marches forthwith with some Brabant men, mercenaries, to besiege the Viscount in his castle of Chalus; proposing, first, to possess himself of the antique and otherwise interesting coin in the castle, and then, on his general principle of objection to thieves, to hang the garrison. The garrison, on this, offer to give up the antiquities if they may march off themselves; but Richard declares that nothing will serve but they must all be hanged. Whereon the siege proceeding by rule, and Richard looking, as usual, into matters with his own eyes, and going too near the walls, an arrow well meant, though half spent, pierces

[1] [Henry, book i. ch. i. § 3 (vol. iii. p. 130), and Roger de Hoveden, vol. ii. p. 318 (Stubbs' edition, 1869).]

[2] [Henry, *ibid.*, p. 138.]

[3] [For Richard's claiming from Tancred, King of Sicily, the dowry of his sister, Johanna, see Henry, *ibid.*, p. 141, and Hoveden, iii. p. 61 (Stubbs); and for the story of the caravan, Henry, *ibid.*, p. 151.]

[4] ["The King of England made presents of many ships to the King of France and his own people, and distributed his treasures with such profuseness among all the knights and men-at-arms of his whole army, that it was said by many that not one of his predecessors had ever given so much in a whole year, as he gave away in that month" (1191): *Annals of Roger de Hoveden*, vol. ii. p. 192 (Bohn).]

[5] [See Henry, *ibid.*, pp. 161, 162.]

the strong white shoulder; the shield-bearing one, carelessly forward above instead of under shield; or perhaps, rather, when he was afoot, shieldless, engineering. He finishes his work, however, though the scratch teases him; plans his assault, carries his castle, and duly hangs his garrison, all but the archer, whom in his royal, unreasoning way he thinks better of, for the well-spent arrow. But he pulls it out impatiently, and the head of it stays in the fair flesh; a little surgery follows; not so skilful as the archery of those days, and the lion heart is appeased[1]—

Sixth April, 1199.

15. We will pursue our historical studies, if you please, in that month of the present year.[2] But I wish, in the meantime, you would observe, and meditate on, the quite Anglican character of Richard, to his death.

It might have been remarked to him, on his projecting the expedition to Chalus, that there were not a few Roman coins, and other antiquities, to be found in his own kingdom of England, without fighting for them, but by mere spade labour and other innocuous means;—that even the brightest new money was obtainable from his loyal people in almost any quantity for civil asking; and that the same loyal people, encouraged and protected, and above all, kept clean-handed, in the arts, by their king, might produce treasures more covetable than any antiquities.

"No;" Richard would have answered,—"that is all hypothetical and visionary; here is a pot of coin presently to be had—no doubt about it—inside the walls here:—let me once get hold of that, and then,"—

. . . . . .

That is what we English call being "Practical."

Believe me,

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] [For references to this account of the death of Cœur-de-Lion, see Letter 78, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 135), and *Pleasures of England*, §§ 81, 107 *n.*]

[2] [See Letter 4, §§ 10 *seq.* (pp. 72 *seq.*).]

## LETTER 4

### SWITCHES OF BROOM[1]

DENMARK HILL,
*1st April*, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—It cannot but be pleasing to us to reflect, this day, that if we are often foolish enough to talk English without understanding it, we are often wise enough to talk Latin without knowing it. For this month retains its pretty Roman name, and means the month of Opening; of the light in the days, and the life in the leaves, and of the voices of birds, and of the hearts of men.

And being the month of Manifestation, it is pre-eminently the month of Fools;—for under the beatific influences of moral sunshine, or Education, the Fools always come out first.

But what is less pleasing to reflect upon, this spring morning, is, that there are some kinds of education which may be described, not as moral sunshine, but as moral moonshine; and that, under these, Fools come out both First—and Last.

2. We have, it seems, now set our opening hearts much on this one point, that we will have education for all men and women now, and for all boys and girls that are to be.[2] Nothing, indeed, can be more desirable, if only we determine also what kind of education we are to have. It is taken for granted that any education must be good;

[1] [For the title, see § 12, p. 76.]
[2] [See above, p. 39; and compare "The Story of Arachne," § 1 (Vol. XX. p. 371 and *n.*).]

—that the more of it we get, the better; that bad education only means little education; and that the worst thing we have to fear is getting none. Alas, that is not at all so. Getting no education is by no means the worst thing that can happen to us. One of the pleasantest friends I ever had in my life was a Savoyard guide, who could only read with difficulty, and write scarcely intelligibly, and by great effort.[1] He knew no language but his own—no science, except as much practical agriculture as served him to till his fields. But he was, without exception, one of the happiest persons, and, on the whole, one of the best, I have ever known: and after lunch, when he had had his half bottle of Savoy wine, he would generally, as we walked up some quiet valley in the afternoon light, give me a little lecture on philosophy; and after I had fatigued and provoked him with less cheerful views of the world than his own, he would fall back to my servant behind me, and console himself with a shrug of the shoulders, and a whispered "Le pauvre enfant, il ne sait pas vivre!"—("The poor child, he doesn't know how to live.")[2]

No, my friends, believe me, it is not the going without education at all that we have most to dread. The real thing to be feared is getting a bad one. There are all sorts—good, and very good; bad, and very bad. The children of rich people often get the worst education that is to be had for money; the children of the poor often get the best for nothing. And you have really these two things now to decide for yourselves in England before you can take one quite safe practical step in the matter, namely, first, what a good education is; and, secondly, who is likely to give it you.

What it is? "Everybody knows that," I suppose you would most of you answer. "Of course—to be taught to

[1] [Joseph Marie Couttet; for whom, see Vol. IV. p. xxv. and *n.*, Vol. XX. p. 371, and Vol. XXVI. p. lv. For his death and other reminiscences of him, see Letter 75, § 10 (Vol. XXIX. p. 67).]

[2] [For another reference to this saying, see below, p. 85.]

read, and write, and cast accounts; and to learn geography, and geology, and astronomy, and chemistry, and German, and French, and Italian, and Latin, and Greek and the aboriginal Aryan language."

3. Well, when you had learned all that, what would you do next? "Next? Why then we should be perfectly happy, and make as much money as ever we liked, and we would turn out our toes before any company." I am not sure myself, and I don't think you can be, of any one of these three things. At least, as to making you very happy, I know something, myself, of nearly all these matters —not much, but still quite as much as most men, under the ordinary chances of life, with a fair education, are likely to get together—and I assure you the knowledge does not make me happy at all. When I was a boy I used to like seeing the sun rise. I didn't know, then, there were any spots on the sun; now I do, and am always frightened lest any more should come. When I was a boy, I used to care about pretty stones. I got some Bristol diamonds at Bristol,[1] and some dog-tooth spar in Derbyshire; my whole collection had cost, perhaps, three half-crowns, and was worth considerably less; and I knew nothing whatever, rightly, about any single stone in it;—could not even spell their names: but words cannot tell the joy they used to give me. Now, I have a collection of minerals worth perhaps from two to three thousand pounds; and I know more about some of them than most other people. But I am not a whit happier, either for my knowledge, or possessions, for other geologists dispute my theories, to my grievous indignation and discontentment; and I am miserable about all my best specimens, because there are better in the British Museum.[2]

4. No, I assure you, knowledge by itself will not make you happy; still less will it make you rich. Perhaps you

[1] [For an account of this acquisition, see *Præterita*, i. § 106.]

[2] [To the Museum, however, he gave some of his best specimens: see Vol. XXVI. pp. 1. *seq.*]

thought I was writing carelessly when I told you, last month, "science did not pay."[1] But you don't know what science is. You fancy it means mechanical art; and so you have put a statue of Science on the Holborn Viaduct,[2] with a steam-engine regulator in its hands. My ingenious friends, science has no more to do with making steam-engines than with making breeches; though she condescends to help you a little in such necessary (or it may be, conceivably, in both cases, sometimes unnecessary) businesses. Science lives only in quiet places, and with odd people, mostly poor. Mr. John Kepler, for instance, who is found by Sir Henry Wotton "in the picturesque green country by the shores of the Donau, in a little black tent in a field, convertible, like a windmill, to all quarters, a camera-obscura, in fact. Mr. John invents rude toys, writes almanacks, practises medicine, for good reasons, his encouragement from the Holy Roman Empire and mankind being a pension of £18 a year and that hardly ever paid."* This is what one gets by star-gazing, my friends. And you cannot be simple enough, even in April, to think I got my three thousand pounds'-worth of minerals by studying mineralogy? Not so; they were earned for me by hard labour; my father's in England, and many a sun-burnt vineyard-dresser's in Spain.[3]

5. "What business had you, in your idleness, with their earnings then?" you will perhaps ask. None, it may be; I will tell you in a little while how you may find that out;[4] it is not to the point now. But it is to the point

* Carlyle, *Frederick*, vol. i. p. 321 (first edition).[5]

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[1] [Not "last month," but in Letter 2, § 17 (p. 40); see also Letter 1, § 8 (p. 19).]

[2] [Then recently finished, the Viaduct having been opened by Queen Victoria on November 6, 1869.]

[3] [For the vineyards of "Ruskin, Telford, and Domecq," see *Præterita*, i. § 25.]

[4] [See below, pp. 185, 187; and compare Letter 67 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 644–646).]

[5] [Book iii. ch. xiv. See also, in Carlyle, the essay on *Voltaire*, and *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, ii.; and for other references by Ruskin to Kepler's wages, *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 449), and Vol. XX. p. 23 *n.*]

that you should observe I have not kept their earnings, the portion of them, at least, with which I bought minerals. That part of their earnings is all gone to feed the miners in Cornwall, or on the Hartz mountains, and I have only got for myself a few pieces of glittering (not always that, but often unseemly) stone, which neither vine-dressers nor miners cared for; which you yourselves would have to learn many hard words, much cramp mathematics, and useless chemistry, in order to care for; which, if ever you did care for, as I do, would most likely only make you envious of the British Museum, and occasionally uncomfortable if any harm happened to your dear stones. I have a piece of red oxide of copper, for instance, which grieves me poignantly by losing its colour;[1] and a crystal of sulphide of lead, with a chip in it, which causes me a great deal of concern—in April; because I see it then by the fresh sunshine.

My oxide of copper and sulphide of lead you will not then wisely envy me. Neither, probably, would you covet a handful of hard brown gravel, with a rough pebble in it, whitish, and about the size of a pea; nor a few grains of apparently brass filings, with which the gravel is mixed. I was but a fool to give good money for such things, you think? It may well be. I gave thirty pounds for that handful of gravel, and the miners who found it were ill-paid then; and it is not clear to me that this produce of their labour was the best possible. Shall we consider of it, with the help of the Cambridge Catechism?[2] at the tenth page of which you will find that Mr. Mill's definition of productive labour is—"That which produces utilities fixed and embodied in material objects."[3]

6. This is very fine—indeed, superfine—English; but I can, perhaps, make the meaning of the Greatest Thinker

[1] [This may be a piece which Ruskin afterwards gave to the Museum of Kirkcudbright: see Vol. XXVI. p. 468.]

[2] [See Letter 1, § 12 (p. 24).]

[3] [See Mill's *Political Economy*, book i. ch. iii. § 3. For other references to Mill's definition, see Letters 71 and 76 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 734 and Vol. XXIX. p. 101).]

in England[1] a little more lucid for you by vulgarizing his terms.

"Object," you must always remember, is fine English for "Thing." It is a semi-Latin word, and properly means a thing "thrown in your way"; so that if you put "ion" to the end of it, it becomes Objection. We will rather say "Thing," if you have no objection—you and I. A "Material" thing, then, of course, signifies something solid and tangible. It is very necessary for Political Economists always to insert this word "material," lest people should suppose that there was any use or value in Thought or Knowledge, and other such immaterial objects.

"Embodied" is a particularly elegant word; but superfluous, because you know it would not be possible that a Utility should be disembodied, as long as it was in a material object. But when you wish to express yourself as thinking in a great manner, you may say—as, for instance, when you are supping vegetable soup—that your power of doing so conveniently and gracefully is "Embodied" in a spoon.

"Fixed" is, I am afraid, rashly, as well as superfluously, introduced into his definition by Mr. Mill. It is conceivable that some Utilities may be also volatile, or planetary, even when embodied. But at last we come to the great word in the great definition—"Utility."

And this word, I am sorry to say, puzzles me most of all; for I never myself saw a Utility, either out of the body, or in it, and should be much embarrassed if ordered to produce one in either state.

But it is fortunate for us that all this seraphic language, reduced to the vulgar tongue, will become, though fallen in dignity and reduced in dimension, perfectly intelligible. The Greatest Thinker in England means by these beautiful words to tell you that Productive labour is labour that produces a Useful Thing. Which, indeed, perhaps, you knew —or, without the assistance of great thinkers, might have

[1] [See above, Letter 2, § 9 (p. 33).]

known, before now. But if Mr. Mill had said so much, simply, you might have been tempted to ask farther—"What things are useful, and what are not?" And as Mr. Mill does not know, nor any other Political Economist going,[1]—and as they therefore particularly wish nobody to ask them,—it is convenient to say instead of "useful things," "utilities fixed and embodied in material objects," because that sounds so very like complete and satisfactory information, that one is ashamed, after getting it, to ask for any more.

7. But it is not, therefore, less discouraging that for the present I have got no help towards discovering whether my handful of gravel with the white pebble in it was worth my thirty pounds or not. I am afraid it is not a useful thing to *me*. It lies at the back of a drawer, locked up all the year round. I never look at it now, for I know all about it: the only satisfaction I have for my money is knowing that nobody else can look at it; and if nobody else wanted to, I shouldn't even have that.

"What did you buy it for, then?" you will ask. Well, if you must have the truth, because I was a Fool, and wanted it. Other people have bought such things before me. The white stone is a diamond, and the apparent brass filings are gold dust; but, I admit, nobody ever yet wanted such things who was in his right senses. Only now, as I have candidly answered all your questions, will you answer one of mine? If I hadn't bought it, what would you have had me do with my money? Keep *that* in the drawer instead?—or at my banker's, till it grew out of thirty pounds into sixty and a hundred, in fulfilment of the law respecting seed sown in good ground?[2]

Doubtless, that would have been more meritorious for the time. But when I had got the sixty or the hundred pounds—what should I have done with *them*? The question only becomes doubly and trebly serious; and all the more, to me, because when I told you last January that I

[1] [Compare Letter 5, § 13 (p. 90).]
[2] [Matthew xiii. 23.]

had bought a picture for a thousand pounds,[1] permitting myself in that folly for your advantage, as I thought, hearing that many of you wanted art Patronage, and wished to live by painting,—one of your own popular organs, the *Liverpool Daily Courier*, of February 9th, said, "it showed want of taste,—of tact," and was "something like a mockery," to tell you so! I am not to buy pictures, therefore, it seems;—you like to be kept in mines and tunnels, and occasionally blown hither and thither, or crushed flat, rather than live by painting, in good light, and with the chance of remaining all day in a whole and unextended skin? But what *shall* I buy, then, with the next thirty pieces of gold I can scrape together? Precious things have been bought, indeed, and sold, before now for thirty pieces, even of silver,[2] but with doubtful issue. The over-charitable person who was bought to be killed at that price, indeed, advised the giving of alms;[3] but you won't have alms, I suppose, you are so independent, nor go into almshouses—(and, truly, I did not much wonder, as I walked by the old church of Abingdon, a Sunday or two since, where the almshouses[4] are set round the churchyard, and under the level of it, and with a cheerful view of it, except that the tombstones slightly block the light of the lattice-windows; with beautiful texts from Scripture over the doors, to remind the paupers still more emphatically that, highly blessed as they were, they were yet mortal)—you won't go into almshouses; and all the clergy in London have been shrieking against almsgiving to the lower poor this whole winter long, till I am obliged, whenever I want to give anybody a penny, to look up and down the street first, to see if a clergyman's coming.[5] Of course, I know I might buy as many iron

[1] [See Letter 1, § 8 (p. 20).]
[2] [Matthew xxvi. 15.]
[3] [Luke xi. 41.]
[4] [Christ's Hospital. Among the texts which decorate the cloister are Acts x. 4, 5; 2 Corinthians ix. 6; Hebrews xiii. 16.]
[5] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 136 (Vol. XVIII. p. 182); and Letter 73, § 17 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 27). It appears from a letter in the *Times* of December 26, 1870, from the Chairman of the Charity Organisation Committee, that mendicity was rife, and that the public could not be persuaded to check it by withholding indiscriminate alms.]

railings as I please,[1] and be praised; but I've no room for them. I can't well burn more coals than I do, because of the blacks, which spoil my books; and the Americans won't let me buy any blacks alive,[2] or else I would have some black dwarfs with parrots, such as one sees in the pictures of Paul Veronese. I should, of course, like myself, above all things, to buy a pretty white girl, with a title—and I could get great praise for doing that—only I haven't money enough.[3] White girls come dear, even when one buys them only like coals, for fuel. The Duke of Bedford, indeed, bought Joan of Arc from the French, to burn, for only ten thousand pounds, and a pension of three hundred a year to the Bastard of Vendôme[4]—and I could and would have given that for her, and not burnt her; but one hasn't such a chance every day. *Will* you, any of you, have the goodness—beggars, clergymen, workmen, seraphic doctors, Mr. Mill, Mr. Fawcett, or the Politico-Economic Professor of my own University—I challenge you, I beseech you, all and singly, to tell me what I am to do with my money.

8. I mean, indeed, to give you my own poor opinion on the subject in May;[5] though I feel the more embarrassed in the thought of doing so, because, in this present April, I am so much a fool as not even to know clearly whether I have got any money or not. I know, indeed, that things go on at present as if I had; but it seems to me that there must be a mistake somewhere, and that some

[1] [See Letter 2, § 10 (p. 37).]

[2] [Compare below, p. 245; and for Ruskin's attitude on the question of slavery, see Vol. XVII. p. 254 *n.*]

[3] [For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 91, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 445).]

[4] [Ruskin here follows many of the historians into an error. The individual into whose hands Joan of Arc had fallen at Compiègne (May 24, 1430) was not of royal blood, "the bastard of Vendôme," but a man-at-arms, in the service of John of Luxembourg, and he is called in contemporary documents "a bastard of Wandonne" (now Wandomme, in the Pas-de-Calais). John, Duke of Bedford, the English Regent in France, bought the Maid (through Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, as intermediary), the 10,000 *livres* going to John of Luxembourg, and the pension to her actual captor, "the bastard." She was then handed over to the Inquisition, and burnt (May 30, 1431). See the collection of documents, edited by Jules Quicherat, under the title *Procès de condemnation et de réhabilitation de Jeanne d'Arc* (Paris, 5 vols., 1841–1849), vol. i. p. 13 *n.*, and vol. iii. p. 134.]

[5] [See Letter 5, §§ 20, 21 (pp. 95–97).]

day it will be found out. For instance, I have seven thousand pounds in what we call the Funds or Founded things; but I am not comfortable about the Founding of them. All that I can see of them is a square bit of paper, with some ugly printing on it, and all that I know of them is that this bit of paper gives me a right to tax you every year, and make you pay me two hundred pounds out of your wages; which is very pleasant for me: but how long will you be pleased to do so? Suppose it should occur to you, any summer's day, that you had better not? Where would my seven thousand pounds be? In fact, where are they now? We call ourselves a rich people; but you see this seven thousand pounds of mine has no real existence; —it only means that you, the workers, are poorer by two hundred pounds a year than you would be if I hadn't got it. And this is surely a very odd kind of money for a country to boast of. Well, then, besides this, I have a bit of low land at Greenwich,[1] which, as far as I see anything of it, is not money at all, but only mud; and would be of as little use to me as my handful of gravel in the drawer, if it were not that an ingenious person has found out that he can make chimney-pots of it; and, every quarter, he brings me fifteen pounds off the price of his chimney-pots, so that I am always sympathetically glad when there's a high wind, because then I know my ingenious friend's business is thriving. But suppose it should come into his head, in any less windy month than this April, that he had better bring me none of the price of his chimneys? And even though he should go on, as I hope he will, patiently,—(and I always give him a glass of wine when he brings me the fifteen pounds),—is this really to be called money of mine? And is the country any richer because, when anybody's chimney-pot is blown down in Greenwich, he must pay something extra, to me, before he can put it on again?

Then, also, I have some houses in Marylebone, which

[1] [For further account of the pottery at Greenwich and houses in Marylebone, see Letter 76, § 20 (Vol. XXIX. p. 102).]

though indeed very ugly and miserable, yet, so far as they are actual beams and brick-bats put into shape, I might have imagined to be real property; only, you know, Mr. Mill says that people who build houses don't produce a commodity, but only do us a service.[1] So I suppose my houses are not "utilities embodied in material objects" (and indeed they don't look much like it); but I know I have the right to keep anybody from living in them unless they pay me; only suppose some day the Irish faith, that people ought to be lodged for nothing, should become an English one also—where would my money be? Where is it now, except as a chronic abstraction from other people's earnings?

9. So again, I have some land in Yorkshire[2]—some Bank "Stock" (I don't in the least know what *that* is)—and the like; but whenever I examine into these possessions, I find they melt into one or another form of future taxation, and that I am always sitting (if I were working I shouldn't mind, but I am only sitting) at the receipt of Custom, and a Publican as well as a sinner.[3] And then to embarrass the business further yet, I am quite at variance with other people about the place where this money, whatever it is, comes from. The *Spectator*, for instance, in its article of 25th June of last year, on Mr. Goschen's "lucid and forcible speech of Friday-week," says that "the country is once more getting rich, and the money is filtering downwards to the actual workers."[4] But whence, then, did it filter down to us, the actual idlers? This is really a question very appropriate for April. For such golden rain raineth *not*

[1] [See above, p. 33 *n.*]

[2] [Ruskin in his copy marks this statement for correction. No land in Yorkshire is mentioned in the full account of his property in Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. p. 100), nor do his representatives know of any such possession. For the Bank Stock, see, again, Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. p. 99 *n.*).]

[3] [Matthew ix. 9, 11.]

[4] ["Mr. Goschen on the Condition of England," vol. 43, p. 716. The article is reprinted in Letter 48, § 21 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 220–221). For another reference to the article, see Letter 7, § 14 (p. 127). The speech in question was made by Mr. Goschen, as President of the Poor Law Board, in the House of Commons on June 17, on a motion by Mr. M'Cullagh Torrens calling attention to "the continued want of employment."]

every day,[1] but in a showery and capricious manner, out of heaven, upon us; mostly, as far as I can judge, rather pouring down than filtering upon idle persons, and running in thinner driblets, but I hope purer for the filtering process, to the "actual workers." But where *does* it come from? and in the times of drought between the showers, where does it go to? "The country is getting rich again," says the *Spectator;* but then, if the April clouds fail, may it get poor again? And when it again becomes poor,—when, last 25th of June, it *was* poor,—what becomes, or had become, of the money? Was it verily lost, or only torpid in the winter of our discontent?[2] or was it sown and buried in corruption,[3] to be raised in a multifold power? When we are in a panic about our money, what do we think is going to happen to it? Can no economist teach us to keep it safe after we have once got it? nor any "beloved physician"[4]—as I read the late Sir James Simpson is called in Edinburgh[5]—guard even our solid gold against death, or at least, fits of an apoplectic character, alarming to the family?

10. All these questions trouble me greatly; but still to me the strangest point in the whole matter is, that though we idlers always speak as if we were enriched by Heaven, and became ministers of its bounty to *you;* if ever you think the ministry slack, and take to definite pillage of us, no good ever comes of it to you; but the sources of wealth seem to be stopped instantly, and you are reduced to the small gain of making gloves of our skins;[6] while, on the contrary, as long as we continue pillaging you, there seems no end to the profitableness of the business; but always, however bare we strip you, presently, more, to be had.

[1] ["For the rain it raineth every day" (*Twelfth Night*, Act v. sc. 1).]
[2] [*King Richard III.*, Act i. sc. 1.]
[3] [1 Corinthians xv. 42.]
[4] [Colossians iv. 14.]
[5] [Sir James Young Simpson (1811–1870); introduced use of chloroform, 1847; created a baronet and D.C.L. of Oxford, 1866; received a public funeral at Edinburgh.]
[6] ["At Meudon there was a Tannery of Human Skins" (Carlyle's *French Revolution*, vol. iii. book v. ch. vii.).]

For instance—just read this little bit out of Froissart—about the English army in France before the battle of Crécy:[1]—

"We will now return to the expedition of the King of England. Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, as marshal, advanced before the King, with the vanguard of five hundred armed men and two thousand archers, and rode on for six or seven leagues' distance from the main army, burning and destroying the country. They found it rich and plentiful, abounding in all things; the barns full of every sort of corn, and the houses with riches: the inhabitants at their ease, having cars, carts, horses, swine, sheep, and everything in abundance which the country afforded. They seized whatever they chose of all these good things, and brought them to the King's army; but the soldiers did not give any account to their officers, or to those appointed by the King, of the gold and silver they took, which they kept to themselves. When they were come back, with all their booty safely packed in waggons, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Suffolk, the Lord Thomas Holland, and the Lord Reginald Cobham, took their march, with their battalion on the right, burning and destroying the country in the same way that Sir Godfrey de Harcourt was doing. The King marched, with the main body, between these two battalions; and every night they all encamped together.

"The King of England and Prince of Wales had, in their battalion, about three thousand men-at-arms, six thousand archers, ten thousand infantry, without counting those that were under the marshals; and they marched on in the manner I have before mentioned, burning and destroying the country, but without breaking their line of battle. They did not turn towards Coutances, but advanced to St. Lo, in Coutantin, which in those days was a very rich and commercial town, and worth three such towns as Coutances. In the town of St. Lo was much drapery, and many wealthy inhabitants; among them you might count eight or nine score that were engaged in commerce. When the King of England was come near to the town, he encamped; he would not lodge in it for fear of fire. He sent, therefore, his advanced guard forward, who soon conquered it, at a trifling loss, and completely plundered it. No one can imagine the quantity of riches they found in it, nor the number of bales of cloth. If there had been any purchasers, they might have bought enough at a very cheap rate.

"The English then advanced towards Caen, which is a much larger town, stronger, and fuller of draperies and all other sorts of merchandize, rich citizens, noble dames and damsels, and fine churches.

"On this day (Froissart does not say what day) the English rose very early, and made themselves ready to march to Caen: the King heard mass before sunrise, and afterwards mounting his horse, with the Prince of Wales,

[1] [For the purport of this extract, see Letters 7, § 13 (p. 127), 45, § 13 *n.* (Vol. XXVIII. p. 158), and 78, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 135). The passages are taken, with some abbreviations, from *Sir John Froissart's Chronicles*, newly translated by Thomas Johnes, 1803, chaps. cxx.–cxxv. (vol. i. pp. 302, 304–305, 306, 307, 308, 309–311, 312).]

and Sir Godfrey de Harcourt (who was marshal and director of the army), marched forward in order of battle. The battalion of the marshals led the van, and came near to the handsome town of Caen.

"When the townsmen, who had taken the field, perceived the English advancing, with banners and pennons flying in abundance, and saw those archers whom they had not been accustomed to, they were so frightened that they betook themselves to flight, and ran for the town in great disorder.

"The English, who were after the runaways, made great havoc; for they spared none.

"Those inhabitants who had taken refuge in the garrets, flung down from them, in these narrow streets, stones, benches, and whatever they could lay hands on; so that they killed and wounded upwards of five hundred of the English, which so enraged the King of England, when he received the reports in the evening, that he ordered the remainder of the inhabitants to be put to the sword, and the town burnt. But Sir Godfrey de Harcourt said to him: 'Dear sir, assuage somewhat of your anger, and be satisfied with what has already been done. You have a long journey yet to make before you arrive at Calais, whither it is your intention to go: and there are in this town a great number of inhabitants, who will defend themselves obstinately in their houses, if you force them to it: besides, it will cost you many lives before the town can be destroyed, which may put a stop to your expedition to Calais, and it will not redound to your honour: therefore be sparing of your men, for in a month's time you will have call for them.' The King replied: 'Sir Godfrey, you are our marshal; therefore order as you please; for this time we wish not to interfere.'

"Sir Godfrey then rode through the streets, his banner displayed before him, and ordered, in the King's name, that no one should dare, under pain of immediate death, to insult or hurt man or woman of the town, or attempt to set fire to any part of it. Several of the inhabitants, on hearing this proclamation, received the English into their houses; and others opened their coffers to them, giving up their all, since they were assured of their lives. However, there were, in spite of these orders, many atrocious thefts and murders committed. The English continued masters of the town for three days; in this time, they amassed great wealth, which they sent in barges down the river of Estreham, to St. Sauveur, two leagues off, where their fleet was. The Earl of Huntingdon made preparations therefore, with the two hundred men-at-arms and his four hundred archers, to carry over to England their riches and prisoners. The King purchased, from Sir Thomas Holland and his companions, the Constable of France and the Earl of Tancarville, and paid down twenty thousand nobles for them.

"When the King had finished his business in Caen, and sent his fleet to England, loaded with cloths, jewels, gold and silver plate, and a quantity of other riches, and upwards of sixty knights, with three hundred able citizens, prisoners; he then left his quarters and continued his march as before, his two marshals on his right and left, burning and destroying all the flat country. He took the road to Evreux, but found he could not gain anything there, as it was well fortified. He went on towards another

town called Louviers, which was in Normandy, and where there were many manufactories of cloth: it was rich and commercial. The English won it easily, as it was not inclosed; and having entered the town, it was plundered without opposition. They collected much wealth there; and, after they had done what they pleased, they marched on into the county of Evreux, where they burnt everything except the fortified towns and castles, which the King left unattacked, as he was desirous of sparing his men and artillery. He therefore made for the banks of the Seine, in his approach to Rouen, where there were plenty of men-at-arms from Normandy, under the command of the Earl of Harcourt, brother to Sir Godfrey, and the Earl of Dreux.

"The English did not march direct towards Rouen, but went to Gisors, which has a strong castle, and burnt the town. After this, they destroyed Vernon, and all the country between Rouen and Pont-de-l'Arche: they then came to Mantes and Meulan, which they treated in the same manner, and ravaged all the country round about.

"They passed by the strong castle of Roulleboise, and everywhere found the bridges on the Seine broken down. They pushed forward until they came to Poissy, where the bridge was also destroyed; but the beams and other parts of it were lying in the river.

"The King of England remained at the nunnery of Poissy to the middle of August, and celebrated there the feast of the Virgin Mary."

11. It all reads at first, you see, just like a piece out of the newspapers of last month; but there are material differences, notwithstanding. We fight inelegantly as well as expensively, with machines instead of bow and spear; we kill about a thousand now to the score then, in settling any quarrel[1]—(Agincourt was won with the loss of less than a hundred men; only 25,000 English altogether were engaged at Crécy; and 12,000, some say only 8000, at Poictiers); we kill with far ghastlier wounds, crashing bones and flesh together; we leave our wounded necessarily for days and nights in heaps on the fields of battle; we pillage districts twenty times as large, and with completer destruction of more valuable property; and with a destruction as irreparable as it is complete; for if the French or English, then, burnt a church one day, they could build a prettier one the next; but the modern Prussians couldn't even build so

[1] [This was a subject in which Ruskin was much interested. It has been contended that, in proportion at least to the number of combatants engaged, war is less sanguinary than it was. On this aspect of the question Ruskin wrote a letter in 1876 to *Fraser's Magazine* (reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. ii. pp. 43 *seq.*, and in a later volume of this edition).]

much as an imitation of one; we rob on credit, by requisition, with ingenious mercantile prolongations of claim; and we improve contention of arms with contention of tongues, and are able to multiply the rancour of cowardice, and mischief of lying, in universal and permanent print; and so we lose our tempers as well as our money, and become indecent in behaviour as in raggedness; for, whereas, in old times, two nations separated by a little pebbly stream like the Tweed, or even the two halves of one nation, separated by thirty fathoms' depth of salt water (for most of the English knights and all the English kings were French by race, and the best of them by birth also)—would go on pillaging and killing each other century after century, without the slightest ill-feeling towards, or disrespect for, one another,—we can neither give anybody a beating courteously, nor take one in good part, or without screaming and lying about it: and finally, we add to these perfected Follies of Action more finely perfected Follies of Inaction; and contrive hitherto unheard-of ways of being wretched through the very abundance of peace; our workmen, here, vowing themselves to idleness, lest they should lower Wages, and there, being condemned by their parishes to idleness, lest they should lower Prices;[1] while outside the workhouse all the parishioners are buying anything nasty, so that it be cheap; and, in a word, under the seraphic teaching of Mr. Mill, we have determined at last that it is not Destruction, but Production, that is the cause of human distress; and the "Mutual and Co-operative Colonization Company" declares, ungrammatically but distinctly, in its circular sent to me on the 18th of last month, as a matter universally admitted, even among Cabinet Ministers—"that it is in the greater increasing power of production and distribution as compared with demand, enabling the few to do the work of many, that the active cause of the wide-spread poverty among the producing and lower-middle classes lay, which entails such enormous burdens on the Nation, and

[1] [On this subject, see above, p. 48.]

exhibits our boasted progress in the light of a monstrous Sham."[1]

12. Nevertheless, however much we have magnified and multiplied the follies of the past, the primal and essential principles of pillage have always been accepted; and from the days when England lay so waste under that worthy and economical King who "called his tailor lown,"[2] that "whole families, after sustaining life as long as they could by eating roots, and the flesh of dogs and horses, at last died of hunger, and you might see many pleasant villages without a single inhabitant of either sex,"[3] while little Harry Switch-of-Broom sate learning to spell in Bristol Castle (taught, I think, properly by his good uncle the preceptorial use of his name-plant, though they say the first Harry was the finer clerk[4]), and his mother, dressed all in white, escaped from Oxford over the snow in the moonlight, through Bagley Wood here, to Abingdon;[5] and under the snows, by Woodstock, the buds were growing for the bower of his Rose,[6]—from that day to this, when the villages round Paris, as to food-supply, are, by the blessing of God, as they then were round London—Kings have for the most part desired to win that pretty name of "Switch-of-Broom" rather by habit of growing in waste places; or even emulating the Vision of Dion in "sweeping—diligently sweeping,"[7]

[1] ["*Cf.* Letter 5, §§ 3 and 11" (pp. 80, 88).—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

[2] [King Stephen: see *Othello*, Act ii. sc. 3.]

[3] [So a contemporary historian, in *Gesta Regis Stephani*, p. 961; quoted by Henry, book iii. ch. i. § 2 (vol. iii. p. 80).]

[4] ["Prince Henry had now (A.D. 1147) resided in the castle of Bristol above four years, prosecuting his studies under the care of his uncle Robert, the most learned as well as the most virtuous nobleman of his age" (Henry, *ibid.*, p. 79). For the first Harry's name of *Beauclerc* (the Fine Scholar), see *ibid.*, p. 59).]

[5] ["The river being frozen over, and the ground covered with snow, she dressed herself and three trusty knights in white, and issuing silently about midnight, at a postern of the castle, passed all the enemies' sentinels unobserved, travelled on foot to Abington, and from thence on horseback to Wallingford" (Henry, *ibid.*, p. 78).]

[6] [See above, Letter 3, § 9 (p. 53).]

[7] [Wordsworth's *Dion* (see Plutarch's *Lives*), iv.:—

"So, but from toil less sign of profit reaping,
The sullen spectre to her purpose bowed,
Sweeping—vehemently sweeping."]

than by attaining the other virtue of the Planta Genista, set forth by Virgil and Pliny, that it is pliant, and rich in honey;[1] the Lion-hearts of them seldom proving profitable to you, even so much as the stomach of Samson's Lion, or rendering it a soluble enigma in our Israel, that "out of the eater came forth meat";[2] nor has it been only your Kings who have thus made you pay for their guidance through the world, but your ecclesiastics have also made you pay for guidance out of it—particularly when it grew dark, and the signpost was illegible where the upper and lower roads divided;—so that as far as I can read or calculate, dying has been even more expensive to you than living;[3] and then, to finish the business, as your virtues have been made costly to you by the clergyman, so your vices have been made costly to you by the lawyers; and you have one entire learned profession living on your sins,[4] and the other on your repentance. So that it is no wonder that, things having gone on thus for a long time, you begin to think that you would rather live as sheep without any shepherd,[5] and that having paid so dearly for your instruction in religion and law, you should now set your hope on a state of instruction in Irreligion and Liberty, which is, indeed, a form of education to be had for nothing, alike by the children of the Rich and Poor; the saplings of the tree that was to be desired to make us wise,[6] growing now in copsewood on the hills, or even by the roadsides, in a Republican-Plantagenet manner, blossoming into cheapest gold, either for coins, which of course you Republicans will call, not Nobles, but Ignobles; or crowns, second and third hand—(head, I should say)—supplied punctually on demand, with liberal reduction on quantity; the roads themselves beautifully public—tramwayed, perhaps—and with

[1] [*Georgics*, ii. 12 (*lentæque genestæ*); Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxiv. 40 (*flores apibus gratissimi*).]
[2] [Judges xiv. 14.]
[3] [Compare Letters 10, § 11 (pp. 172-173) and 31 (p. 580).]
[4] [On lawyers, see above, p. 55.]
[5] [See 1 Kings xxii. 17; Matthew ix. 36.]
[6] [Genesis iii. 6.]

gates set open enough for all men to the free, outer, better world, your chosen guide preceding you merrily, thus[1]—with music and dancing.[2]

*Fig. 2*

You have always danced too willingly, poor friends, to that player on the viol. We will try to hear, far away, a faint note or two from a more chief musician on stringed instruments, in May, when the time of the Singing of Birds is come.[3]

Faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] [A facsimile by Arthur Burgess of the third woodcut ("The Expulsion from Eden") by Holbein in the "Dance of Death."]
[2] [1 Samuel xviii. 6.]
[3] [Canticles ii. 12.]

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HOPE

Drawn thus by Giotto in the Chapel of the Arena at Padua.

## LETTER 5[1]

### THE WHITE-THORN BLOSSOM[2]

"For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone,
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of the singing of birds is come,

Arise, O my fair one, my dove,
And come."[3]

DENMARK HILL,
*1st May*, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—It has been asked of me, very justly, why I have hitherto written to you of things you were little likely to care for, in words which it was difficult for you to understand.[4]

I have no fear but that you will one day understand all my poor words,—the saddest of them, perhaps, too well. But I have great fear that you may never come to understand these written above, which are part of a king's love-song, in one sweet May, of many long since gone.

I fear that for you the wild winter's rain may never pass,—the flowers never appear on the earth;—that for you no bird may ever sing;—for you no perfect Love arise, and fulfil your life in peace.

"And why not for us, as for others?" will you answer me so, and take my fear for you as an insult?

Nay, it is no insult;—nor am I happier than you. For me, the birds do not sing, nor ever will. But they would, for you, if you cared to have it so. When I told you

[1] [For Carlyle's comments on this letter, see above, Introduction, p. lxxxvi.]
[2] [The title is suggested by the date of the letter, May Day, the festival of Merrie England.]
[3] [Canticles ii. 11–13.]
[4] [Compare below, p. 181.]

that you would never understand that love-song, I meant only that you would not desire to understand it.

2. Are you again indignant with me? Do you think, though you should labour, and grieve, and be trodden down in dishonour all your days, at least you can keep that one joy of Love, and that one honour of Home? Had you, indeed, kept that, you had kept all. But no men yet, in the history of the race, have lost it so piteously. In many a country, and many an age, women have been compelled to labour for their husbands' wealth, or bread; but never until now were they so homeless as to say, like the poor Samaritan, "I have no husband."[1] Women of every country and people have sustained without complaint the labour of fellowship: for the women of the latter days in England it has been reserved to claim the privilege of isolation.

This, then, is the end of your universal education and civilization, and contempt of the ignorance of the Middle Ages, and of their chivalry. Not only do you declare yourselves too indolent to labour for daughters and wives, and too poor to support them; but you have made the neglected and distracted creatures hold it for an honour to be independent of you, and shriek for some hold of the mattock for themselves. Believe it or not, as you may, there has not been so low a level of thought reached by any race, since they grew to be male and female out of star-fish, or chickweed, or whatever else they have been made from, by natural selection,—according to modern science.

3. That modern science also, Economic and of other kinds, has reached its climax at last. For it seems to be the appointed function of the nineteenth century to exhibit in all things the elect pattern of perfect Folly, for a warning to the farthest future. Thus the statement of principle which I quoted to you in my last letter,[2] from the circular of the Emigration Society, that it is over-production which is the cause of distress, is accurately the most foolish thing,

[1] [John iv. 17.]
[2] [See Letter 4, § 11 (pp. 75–76).]

not only hitherto ever said by men, but which it is possible for men ever to say, respecting their own business. It is a kind of opposite pole (or negative acme of mortal stupidity) to Newton's discovery of gravitation as an acme of mortal wisdom:—as no wise being on earth will ever be able to make such another wise discovery, so no foolish being on earth will ever be capable of saying such another foolish thing, through all the ages.

4. And the same crisis has been exactly reached by our natural science and by our art. It has several times chanced to me, since I began these papers, to have the exact thing shown or brought to me that I wanted for illustration,[1] just in time*—and it happened that on the very day on which I published my last letter, I had to go to the Kensington Museum; and there I saw the most perfectly and roundly ill-done thing which, as yet, in my whole life I ever saw produced by art. It had a tablet in front of it, bearing this inscription:—

"Statue in black and white marble, a Newfoundland Dog standing on a Serpent, which rests on a marble cushion, the pedestal ornamented with pietra dura fruits in relief.—*English. Present Century.* No. I."[2]

It was so very right for me, the Kensington people having been good enough to number it "I.," the thing itself being almost incredible in its one-ness; and, indeed, such a punctual accent over the iota of Miscreation,—so absolutely and exquisitely miscreant,[3] that I am not myself

* Here is another curious instance: I have but a minute ago finished correcting these sheets, and take up the *Times* of this morning, April 21st, and find in it the suggestion by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the removal of exemption from taxation of Agricultural horses and carts,[4] in the very nick of time to connect it, as a proposal for economic practice, with the statement of economic principle respecting Production, quoted on last page.

[1] [See, for instance, above, p. 42; and compare, below, p. 360.]

[2] [For another reference to this statue, see *The Eagle's Nest*, § 88 (Vol. XXII. p. 187).]

[3] [Ruskin in his copy puts against this word, "Needs a note." He explains elsewhere that the word "miscreant" means etymologically "unbelieving" (so Sir T. More, *Works*, p. 774 *a*: "all miscreant paynyms"): see below, p. 466; and Vol. XXVIII. p. 762. Compare also *Deucalion*, i. ch. vii. § 34 (Vol. XXVI. p. 188).]

[4] [In his Budget speech (April 20) Lowe had referred regretfully to the exemptions in question. He disapproved of them, but "did not suppose the Committee

capable of conceiving a Number two, or three, or any rivalship or association with it whatsoever. The extremity of its unvirtue consisted, observe, mainly in the quantity of instruction which was abused in it. It showed that the persons who produced it had seen everything, and practised everything; and misunderstood everything they saw, and misapplied everything they did. They had seen Roman work, and Florentine work, and Byzantine work, and Gothic work; and misunderstanding of everything had passed through them as the mud does through earthworms, and here at last was their worm-cast of a Production.

5. But the second chance that came to me that day, was more significant still. From the Kensington Museum I went to an afternoon tea, at a house where I was sure to meet some nice people. And among the first I met was an old friend who had been hearing some lectures on botany at the Kensington Museum, and been delighted by them. / She is the kind of person who gets good out of everything, and she was quite right in being delighted; besides that, as I found by her account of them, the lectures were really interesting, and pleasantly given. She had expected botany to be dull, and had not found it so, and "had learned so much." On hearing this, I proceeded naturally to inquire what; for my idea of her was that before she went to the lectures at all, she had known more botany than she was likely to learn by them. So she told me that she had learned first of all that "there were seven sorts of leaves." Now I have always a great suspicion of the number Seven; because when I wrote the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, it required all the ingenuity I was master of to prevent them from becoming Eight, or even Nine, on my hands.[1] So I thought to myself that it would be very charming if there were only seven sorts of leaves; but that, perhaps, if one looked the woods and forests of the

would assist him in doing away with them." For another reference to the same Budget speech, see below, p. 101.]

[1] [Compare Vol. VIII. p. 138 *n.*]

world carefully through, it was just possible that one might discover as many as eight sorts; and then where would my friend's new knowledge of Botany be? So I said, "That was very pretty; but what more?" Then my friend told me that she had no idea, before, that petals were leaves.[1] On which, I thought to myself that it would not have been any great harm to her if she had remained under her old impression that petals were petals. But I said, "That was very pretty, too; and what more?" So then my friend told me that the lecturer said, "the object of his lectures would be entirely accomplished if he could convince his hearers that there was no such thing as a flower." Now, in that sentence you have the most perfect and admirable summary given you of the general temper and purposes of modern science. It gives lectures on Botany, of which the object is to show that there is no such thing as a flower; on Humanity, to show that there is no such thing as a Man; and on Theology, to show there is no such thing as a God. No such thing as a Man, but only a Mechanism; no such thing as a God, but only a series of forces. The two faiths are essentially one: if you feel yourself to be only a machine, constructed to be a Regulator of minor machinery, you will put your statue of such science on your Holborn Viaduct,[2] and necessarily recognize only major machinery as regulating *you*.

6. I must explain the real meaning to you, however, of that saying of the Botanical lecturer, for it has a wide bearing. Some fifty years ago the poet Goethe discovered that all the parts of plants had a kind of common nature, and would change into each other.[3] Now this was a true discovery, and a notable one; and you will find that, in fact, all plants are composed of essentially two parts—the leaf and root[4]—one loving the light, the other darkness; one

[1] [The account of the lecture here given was not, it seems, strictly accurate: see below, p. 125 *n.*]

[2] [Compare Letter 4, § 4 (p. 63).]

[3] [*Versuch die Metamorphose der Pflanzen zu erklären*, first published at Gotha in 1790.]

[4] [Compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 218.]

liking to be clean, the other to be dirty; one liking to grow for the most part up, the other for the most part down; and each having faculties and purposes of its own. But the pure one which loves the light has, above all things, the purpose of being married to another leaf, and having child-leaves, and children's children of leaves, to make the earth fair for ever. And when the leaves marry, they put on wedding-robes, and are more glorious than Solomon in all his glory,[1] and they have feasts of honey, and we call them "Flowers."

7. In a certain sense, therefore, you see the lecturer was quite right. There are no such things as Flowers—there are only—gladdened Leaves. Nay, farther than this, there may be a dignity in the less happy, but unwithering leaf, which is, in some sort, better than the brief lily of its bloom;—which the great poets always knew,—well;—Chaucer, before Goethe; and the writer of the first Psalm, before Chaucer.[2] The Botanical lecturer was, in a deeper sense than he knew, right.

But in the deepest sense of all, the Botanical lecturer was, to the extremity of wrongness, wrong; for leaf, and root, and fruit, exist, all of them, only—that there may be flowers.[3] He disregarded the life and passion of the creature, which were its essence. Had he looked for these, he would have recognized that in the thought of Nature herself, there is, in a plant, nothing else but its flowers.

Now in exactly the sense that modern Science declares there is no such thing as a Flower, it has declared there is no such thing as a Man, but only a transitional form of Ascidians and apes. It may, or may not be true—it is not of the smallest consequence whether it be or not. The real fact is, that, rightly seen with human eyes, there is nothing else but man; that all animals and beings beside

[1] [Matthew vi. 29.]

[2] ["His leaf also shall not wither" (Psalms i. 3); for other references to Chaucer's poem, *The Flower and the Leaf*, see Vol. VII. pp. 474, 477.]

[3] [Compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. pp. 249, 250.]

him are only made that they may change into him; that the world truly exists only in the presence of Man, acts only in the passion of Man. The essence of light is in his eyes,—the centre of Force in his soul,—the pertinence* of action in his deeds.

And all true science—which my Savoyard guide rightly scorned me when he thought I had not,—all true science is "savoir vivre."[1] But all your modern science is the contrary of that. It is "savoir mourir." †

8. And of its very discoveries, such as they are, it cannot make use.

That telegraphic signalling was a discovery; and conceivably, some day, may be a useful one. And there was some excuse for your being a little proud when, about last sixth of April[2] (Cœur-de-Lion's death-day, and Albert Dürer's), you knotted a copper wire all the way to Bombay, and flashed a message along it, and back.

But what was the message, and what the answer? Is India the better for what you said to her? Are you the better for what she replied?

If not, you have only wasted an all-round-the-world's length of copper wire,—which is, indeed, about the sum of your doing. If you had had, perchance, two words of common-sense to say, though you had taken wearisome time and trouble to send them;—though you had written them slowly in gold, and sealed them with a hundred seals,

* Observe the use of the word "pertinence"; meaning action which "pertains" or properly belongs to the agent and aim, as opposed to accidental and impertinent action.[3]

† Note this passage, one of the most important of the book, and *compare* Letter 4, §§ 3 and 4 (pp. 62–63).—*Author's Note in the Index to Vols. I. and II.*

[1] [See Letter 4, § 2 (p. 61).]

[2] [That is, in 1870. The *Times* City article of April 7, 1870, contains the following note: "Telegraphic communication with India appears now to be efficiently established. A message was received to-day through the British-Indian Submarine, at 1 P.M. from Bombay, dated 1.35, the transit, allowing for difference of time, being thus about four hours."]

[3] [This is Ruskin's note in the Index to vols. i. and ii., under the entry "Man, the centre of his world," where he also inserts in the text (above, p. 84) the word "rightly" ("rightly seen with human eyes").]

and sent a squadron of ships of the line to carry the scroll, and the squadron had fought its way round the Cape of Good Hope, through a year of storms, with loss of all its ships but one,—the two words of common-sense would have been worth the carriage, and more. But you have not anything like so much as that to say, either to India, or to any other place.[1]

9. You think it a great triumph to make the sun draw brown landscapes for you. That was also a discovery, and some day may be useful.[2] But the sun had drawn landscapes before for you, not in brown, but in green, and blue, and all imaginable colours, here in England. Not one of you ever looked at them then; not one of you cares for the loss of them now, when you have shut the sun out with smoke, so that he can draw nothing more, except brown blots through a hole in a box. There was a rocky valley between Buxton and Bakewell, once upon a time, divine as the Vale of Tempe; you might have seen the Gods there morning and evening—Apollo and all the sweet Muses of the light—walking in fair procession on the lawns of it, and to and fro among the pinnacles of its crags. You cared neither for Gods nor grass, but for cash (which you did not know the way to get); you thought you could get it by what the *Times* calls "Railroad Enterprise." You Enterprised a Railroad through the valley—you blasted its rocks away, heaped thousands of tons of shale into its lovely stream. The valley is gone, and the Gods with it; and now, every fool in Buxton can be at Bakewell in half-an-hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton; which you think a lucrative process of exchange—you Fools Everywhere.[3]

To talk at a distance, when you have nothing to say, though you were ever so near; to go fast from this place

[1] ["Said in *Stones of Venice;* and *compare* Letter 29, § 11" (p. 537).—*MS. note in Author's copy.* The real reference is, however, to *Modern Painters,* vol. iii., where Ruskin quotes Emerson to like effect: see Vol. V. p. 381 and *n.*]

[2] [For Ruskin's personal interest in photography, see Vol. III. p. 210 *n.*; for discussions of its relation to art, Vol. XX. pp. 27, 165, 363.]

[3] [Ruskin reprinted § 9 in *Præterita,* iii. § 84 *n.*]

to that, with nothing to do either at one or the other: these are powers certainly. Much more, power of increased Production, if you, indeed, had got it, would be something to boast of. But are you so entirely sure that you *have* got it—that the mortal disease of plenty, and afflictive affluence of good things, are all you have to dread?

10. Observe. A man and a woman, with their children, properly trained, are able easily to cultivate as much ground as will feed them; to build as much wall and roof as will lodge them, and to spin and weave as much cloth as will clothe them. They can all be perfectly happy and healthy in doing this. Supposing that they invent machinery which will build, plough, thresh, cook, and weave, and that they have none of these things any more to do, but may read, or play croquet, or cricket, all day long, I believe myself that they will neither be so good nor so happy as without the machines. But I waive my belief in this matter for the time. I will assume that they become more refined and moral persons, and that idleness is in future to be the mother of all good. But observe, I repeat, the power of your machine is only in enabling them to be idle. It will not enable them to live better than they did before, nor to live in greater numbers. Get your heads quite clear on this matter. Out of so much ground, only so much living is to be got, with or without machinery. You may set a million of steam-ploughs to work on an acre, if you like—out of that acre only a given number of grains of corn will grow, scratch or scorch it as you will. So that the question is not at all whether, by having more machines, more of you can live. No machines will increase the possibilities of life. They only increase the possibilities of idleness. Suppose, for instance, you could get the oxen in your plough driven by a goblin, who would ask for no pay, not even a cream bowl,[1]—(you have nearly managed to get it driven

[1] [Milton's *L'Allegro*:—

"Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set."

The passage is again referred to in Letter 61, § 20 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 506).]

by an iron goblin, as it is);—Well, your furrow will take no more seeds than if you had held the stilts yourself. But, instead of holding them, you sit, I presume, on a bank beside the field, under an eglantine;—watch the goblin at his work, and read poetry. Meantime, your wife in the house has also got a goblin to weave and wash for her. And she is lying on the sofa, reading poetry.

11. Now, as I said, I don't believe you would be happier so, but I am willing to believe it; only, since you are already such brave mechanists, show me at least one or two places where you *are* happier. Let me see one small example of approach to this seraphic condition. *I* can show *you* examples, millions of them, of happy people, made happy by their own industry. Farm after farm I can show you, in Bavaria, Switzerland, the Tyrol, and such other places, where men and women are perfectly happy and good, without any iron servants. Show me, therefore, some English family, with its fiery familiar, happier than these. Or bring me,—for I am not inconvincible by any kind of evidence,—bring me the testimony of an English family or two to their increased felicity. Or if you cannot do so much as that, can you convince even themselves of it? They *are* perhaps happy, if only they knew how happy they were; Virgil thought so, long ago, of simple rustics;[1] but you hear at present your steam-propelled rustics are crying out that they are anything else than happy, and that they regard their boasted progress "in the light of a monstrous Sham."[2] I must tell you one little thing, however, which greatly perplexes my imagination of the relieved ploughman sitting under his rose bower, reading poetry. I have told it you before indeed, but I forget where.[3] There was really a great festivity, and expression of satisfaction in the new order of things, down in Cumberland, a little while ago; some first of May, I

[1] [*Georgics*, ii. 458 ("O fortunatos nimium sua si bona norint").]
[2] [See Letter 4, § 11 (p. 76).]
[3] [*Crown of Wild Olive*, § 152 (Vol. XVIII. p. 508).]

think it was, a country festival, such as the old heathens, who had no iron servants, used to keep with piping and dancing. So I thought, from the liberated country people —their work all done for them by goblins—we should have some extraordinary piping and dancing. But there was no dancing at all, and they could not even provide their own piping. They had their goblin to pipe for them. They walked in procession after their steam-plough, and their steam-plough whistled to them occasionally in the most melodious manner it could. Which seemed to me, indeed, a return to more than Arcadian simplicity; for in old Arcadia, ploughboys truly whistled as they went, for want of thought;[1] whereas, here was verily a large company walking without thought, but not having any more even the capacity of doing their own whistling.[2]

12. But next, as to the inside of the house. Before you got your power-looms, a woman could always make herself a chemise and petticoat of bright and pretty appearance. I have seen a Bavarian peasant-woman at church in Munich, looking a much grander creature, and more beautifully dressed, than any of the crossed and embroidered angels in Hess's high-art frescoes;[3] (which happened to be just above her, so that I could look from one to the other). Well, here you are, in England, served by household demons, with five hundred fingers, at least, weaving, for one that used to weave in the day of Minerva. You ought to be able to show me five hundred dresses for one that used to be; tidiness ought to have become five hundred-fold tidier; tapestry should be increased into cinque-cento-fold iridescence of tapestry. Not only your peasant-girl ought to be lying on the sofa reading poetry, but she ought to have in her wardrobe five hundred petticoats instead of one. Is

[1] [Dryden, *Cymon and Iphigenia*, 84.]

[2] [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 46 (Vol. XVII. p. 356); and Letter 57, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 405).]

[3] [Heinrich Maria von Hess (1798–1863), an artist of the Düsseldorf school, painted the frescoes in the Allerheiligen Hofkirche at Munich. For another reference to him, written at the time of Ruskin's visit to Munich in 1859, see Vol. VII. p. liii.]

that, indeed, your issue? or are you only on a curiously crooked way to it?

18. It is just possible, indeed, that you may not have been allowed to get the use of the goblin's work—that other people may have got the use of it, and you none; because, perhaps, you have not been able to evoke goblins wholly for your own personal service: but have been borrowing goblins from the capitalist, and paying interest, in the "position of William," on ghostly self-going planes;[1] but suppose you had laid by capital enough, yourselves, to hire all the demons in the world,—nay,—all that are inside of it; are you quite sure you know what you might best set them to work at? and what "useful things" you should command them to make for you? I told you, last month, that no economist going (whether by steam or ghost) knew what are useful things and what are not.[2] Very few of you know, yourselves, except by bitter experience of the want of them. And no demons, either of iron or spirit, can ever make them.

14. There are three Material things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one "knows how to live"[3] till he has got them.

These are, Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

There are three Immaterial things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one knows how to live till he has got them.

These are, Admiration, Hope, and Love.*

* Wordsworth, *Excursion*, Book 4th; in Moxon's edition, 1857 (stupidly without numbers to lines), vol. vi. p. 135.[4]

Love, chief of the three spiritual needs, put last, as culminating, or crowning, because men must be capable of admiration and of hope before they can be capable of love. Wordsworth's verse, "We live by admiration, hope, and love," is answered presently[5] with the words in a reverse order—love, hope, and admiration.

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[1] [See Letter 1, §§ 13, 14 (pp. 24 *seq.*).]

[2] [See Letter 4, § 6 (p. 66).]

[3] [Compare Letter 4, § 2 (p. 61).]

[4] [This was the author's note to the text of *Fors*; the following passage is his note in the Index to vols. i. and ii. of *Fors*. The line from Wordsworth is quoted also in Letter 50, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 255); and in Vol. VII. p. 309, Vol. XVI. p. 154, Vol. XVII. p. 105, and Vol. XX. p. 71. Compare also Vol. XXVI. p. 338.]

[5] [That is, five lines lower down in the same Book of the *Excursion*.]

Admiration—the power of discerning and taking delight in what is beautiful in visible Form, and lovely in human Character; and, necessarily, striving to produce what is beautiful in form, and to become what is lovely in character.

Hope—the recognition, by true Foresight, of better things to be reached hereafter, whether by ourselves or others; necessarily issuing in the straightforward and undisappointable effort to advance, according to our proper power, the gaining of them.

Love, both of family and neighbour, faithful, and satisfied.

These are the six chiefly useful things to be got by Political Economy, when it *has* become a science. I will briefly tell you what modern Political Economy—the great "savoir mourir"[1]—is doing with them.

15. The first three, I said, are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

Heaven gives you the main elements of these. You can destroy them at your pleasure, or increase, almost without limit, the available quantities of them.

You can vitiate the air by your manner of life, and of death, to any extent. You might easily vitiate it so as to bring such a pestilence on the globe as would end all of you. You, or your fellows, German and French, are at present busy in vitiating it to the best of your power in every direction; chiefly at this moment with corpses, and animal and vegetable ruin in war: changing men, horses, and garden-stuff into noxious gas. But everywhere, and all day long, you are vitiating it with foul chemical exhalations; and the horrible nests, which you call towns, are little more than laboratories for the distillation into heaven of venomous smokes and smells, mixed with effluvia from decaying animal matter, and infectious miasmata from purulent disease.

On the other hand, your power of purifying the air, by

[1] [Compare above, § 7.]

dealing properly and swiftly with all substances in corruption; by absolutely forbidding noxious manufactures; and by planting in all soils the trees which cleanse and invigorate earth and atmosphere,—is literally infinite. You might make every breath of air you draw, food.

16. Secondly, your power over the rain and river-waters of the earth is infinite. You can bring rain where you will,[1] by planting wisely and tending carefully;—drought where you will, by ravage of woods and neglect of the soil. You might have the rivers of England as pure as the crystal of the rock; beautiful in falls, in lakes, in living pools; so full of fish that you might take them out with your hands instead of nets. Or you may do always as you have done now, turn every river of England into a common sewer, so that you cannot so much as baptize an English baby but with filth, unless you hold its face out in the rain; and even *that* falls dirty.

17. Then for the third, Earth,—meant to be nourishing for you, and blossoming. You have learned, about it, that there is no such thing as a flower;[2] and as far as your scientific hands and scientific brains, inventive of explosive and deathful, instead of blossoming and life-giving, Dust, can contrive, you have turned the Mother-Earth, Demeter,*

* Read this, for instance, concerning the Gardens of Paris: one sentence in the letter is omitted; I will give it in full elsewhere,[3] with its necessary comments:—

"*To the Editor of the 'Times'*

"*5th April*, 1871.[4]

"SIR,—As the paragraph you quoted on Monday from the *Field* gives no idea of the destruction of the gardens round Paris, if you can spare me a very little space I will endeavour to supplement it.

"The public gardens in the interior of Paris, including the planting on the greater number of the Boulevards, are in a condition perfectly surprising when one considers the sufferings even well-to-do persons had to endure for want of fuel during the siege. Some of them, like the little oases in the

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[1] [Compare Letter 85, §§ 5, 6 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 323–324).]
[2] [See above, p. 83.]
[3] [This, however, was not done.]
[4] [The letter itself is undated; it appeared in the *Times* of April 5.]

into the Avenger-Earth, Tisiphone[1]—with the voice of your brother's blood crying out of it,[2] in one wild harmony round all its murderous sphere.

This is what you have done for the three Material Useful Things.

18. Then for the Three Immaterial Useful Things. For

centre of the Louvre, even look as pretty as ever. After a similar ordeal it is probable we should not have a stick left in London, and the presence of the very handsome planes on the Boulevards, and large trees in the various squares and gardens, after the winter of 1870–71, is most creditable to the population. But when one goes beyond the Champs Elysées and towards the Bois, down the once beautiful Avenue de l'Impératrice, a sad scene of desolation presents itself. A year ago it was the finest avenue garden in existence; now a considerable part of the surface where troops were camped is about as filthy and as cheerless as Leicester Square or a sparsely furnished rubbish yard.

"The view into the once richly-wooded Bois from the huge and ugly banks of earth which now cross the noble roads leading into it is desolate indeed, the stump of the trees cut down over a large extent of its surface reminding one of the dreary scenes observable in many parts of Canada and the United States, where the stumps of the burnt or cut-down pines are allowed to rot away for years. The zone of the ruins round the vast belt of fortifications I need not speak of, nor of the other zone of destruction round each of the forts, as here houses and gardens and all have disappeared. But the destruction in the wide zone occupied by French and Prussian outposts is beyond description. I got to Paris the morning after the shooting of Generals Clément Thomas and Lecomte,[3] and in consequence did not see so much of it as I otherwise might have done; but round the villages of Sceaux, Bourg-la-Reine, L'Hay, Vitry, and Villejuif, I saw an amount of havoc which the subscriptions to the French Horticultural Relief Fund will go but a very small way to repair. Notwithstanding all his revolutions and wars, the Frenchman usually found time to cultivate a few fruit trees, and the neighbourhood of the villages above mentioned was only a few of many covered by nurseries of young trees. When I last visited Vitry, in the autumn of 1868, the fields and hill-sides around were everywhere covered with trees; now the view across them is only interrupted by stumps about a foot high. When at Vitry on the 28th of March, I found the once fine nursery of M. Honoré Dufresne deserted, and many acres once covered with large stock and specimens cleared to the ground. And so it was in numerous other cases. It may give some notion of the effect of the war on the gardens and nurseries around Paris, when I state that, according to returns made up just before my visit to Vitry and Villejuif, it was found

[1] [See Vol. XVII. pp. 95 *n.*, 99, 255, and Vol. XX. p. 143.]

[2] [Genesis iv. 10.]

[3] [These two Generals were shot on March 18 by the Communists: see the *Times*, March 21.]

Admiration, you have learnt contempt and conceit.* There is no lovely thing ever yet done by man that you care for, or can understand; but you are persuaded you are able to do much finer things yourselves. You gather, and exhibit together, as if equally instructive, what is infinitely bad, with what is infinitely good. You do not know which is which; you instinctively prefer the Bad, and do more of it. You instinctively hate the Good, and destroy it.†

Then, secondly, for Hope. You have not so much spirit of it in you as to begin any plan which will not pay until ten years; nor so much intelligence of it in you (either politicians or workmen) as to be able to form one clear idea of what you would like your country to become.

Then, thirdly, for Love. You were ordered by the

that around these two villages alone 2,400,400 fruit and other trees were destroyed. As to the private gardens, I cannot give a better idea of them than by describing the materials composing the protecting bank of a battery near Sceaux. It was made up of mattresses, sofas, and almost every other large article of furniture, with the earth stowed between. There were, in addition, nearly forty orange and oleander tubs gathered from the little gardens in the neighbourhood visible in various parts of this ugly bank. One nurseryman at Sceaux, M. Keteleer, lost 1500 vols. of books, which were not taken to Germany, but simply mutilated and thrown out of doors to rot.[1] . . . Multiply these few instances by the number of districts occupied by the belligerents during the war, and some idea of the effects of glory on gardening in France may be obtained. W. ROBINSON."

* Compare Republican letter in correspondence at the end of Letter 29 [p. 543].—*Index to Vols. I. and II.*

† Last night (I am writing this on the 18th of April) I got a letter from Venice, bringing me the, I believe, too well-grounded, report that the Venetians have requested permission from the government of Italy to pull down their Ducal Palace, and "rebuild" it. Put up a horrible model of it, in its place, that is to say, for which their architects may charge a commission.[2] Meantime, all their canals are choked with human dung, which they are too poor to cart away, but throw out at their windows.

And all the great thirteenth-century cathedrals in France have been destroyed, within my own memory, only that architects might charge commission for putting up false models of them in their place.

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[1] [The omitted passage is: "His dwelling-house, inhabited by Bavarians, was half filled with ordure, as were the pretty orchid-houses beneath the windows."]

[2] [Compare the lecture on "The Architecture of the Valley of the Somme," § 31 (Vol. XIX. p. 265). The Ducal Palace was not pulled down and rebuilt, but extensive restorations were commenced at this time: see Vol. X. p. 464.]

Founder of your religion to love your neighbour as yourselves.[1]

You have founded an entire Science of Political Economy, on what you have stated to be the constant instinct of man—the desire to defraud his neighbour.

And you have driven your women mad, so that they ask no more for Love, nor for fellowship with you; but stand against you, and ask for "justice."

19. Are there any of you who are tired of all this? Any of you, Landlords or Tenants? Employers or Workmen?

Are there any landlords,—any masters,—who would like better to be served by men than by iron devils?

Any tenants, any workmen, who can be true to their leaders and to each other? who can vow to work and to live faithfully, for the sake of the joy of their homes?

Will any such give the tenth of what they have, and of what they earn,[2]—not to emigrate with, but to stay in England with; and do what is in their hands and hearts to make her a happy England?

20. I am not rich (as people now estimate riches), and great part of what I have is already engaged in maintaining art-workmen, or for other objects more or less of public utility. The tenth of whatever is left to me, estimated as accurately as I can (you shall see the accounts), I will make over to you in perpetuity, with the best security that English law can give, on Christmas Day of this year,[3] with engagement to add the tithe of whatever I earn afterwards. Who else will help, with little or much? the object of such fund being, to begin, and gradually—no matter how slowly—to increase, the buying and securing of land in England, which shall not be built upon, but cultivated by Englishmen, with their own hands, and such help of force as they can find in wind and wave.

21. I do not care with how many, or how few, this

[1] [Matthew v. 43.]

[2] [A correspondent subsequently raised the question whether Ruskin required a tenth of what they have *and* earn, or of what they have *or* make (as at p. 296): see Letter 42, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 104).]

[3] [See Letter 12, § 1 (p. 199).]

thing is begun, nor on what inconsiderable scale,—if it be but in two or three poor men's gardens.[1] So much, at least, I can buy, myself, and give them.[2] If no help come, I have done and said what I could, and there will be an end. If any help come to me, it is to be on the following conditions:—We will try to take some small piece of English ground, beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful. We will have no steam-engines upon it, and no railroads; we will have no untended or unthought-of creatures on it; none wretched, but the sick; none idle but the dead. We will have no liberty upon it;[3] but instant obedience to known law, and appointed persons: no equality upon it;[4] but recognition of every betterness that we can find, and reprobation of every worseness. When we want to go anywhere, we will go there quietly and safely, not at forty miles an hour in the risk of our lives; when we want to carry anything anywhere, we will carry it either on the backs of beasts, or on our own, or in carts, or boats; we will have plenty of flowers and vegetables in our gardens, plenty of corn and grass in our fields,—and few bricks. We will have some music and poetry; the children shall learn to dance to it and sing it;—perhaps some of the old people, in time, may also. We will have some art, moreover; we will at least try if, like the Greeks, we can't make some pots. The Greeks used to paint pictures of gods on their pots; we, probably, cannot do as much, but we may put some pictures of insects on them, and reptiles;—butterflies, and frogs, if nothing better. There was an excellent old potter in France who used to put frogs and vipers into his dishes, to the admiration of mankind;[5] we can surely put something nicer than that. Little by little, some higher art and imagination may manifest themselves among us; and

[1] [For a restatement, by Ruskin, in a later letter of the argument in § 21 here, see below, p. 380.]

[2] ["Mark this—all I promised."—*MS. note in Author's copy.* The note should be read in connexion with Letter 49, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 236), where Ruskin disclaims the idea of founding a colony.]

[3] [Compare, below, pp. 105, 107; also Vol. XX. p. 173, and General Index.]

[4] [Compare Letter 9, § 4 (p. 148); see also Letter 95, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 496), Vol. VIII. p. 167 *n.*, Vol. XI. p. 260 *n.*; and Vol. XVI. p. 121.]

[5] [Palissy: see Letter 6, § 6 (p. 104).]

feeble rays of science may dawn for us. Botany, though too dull to dispute the existence of flowers; and history, though too simple to question the nativity of men;—nay—even perhaps an uncalculating and uncovetous wisdom,[1] as of rude Magi, presenting, at such nativity, gifts of gold and frankincense.[2]

Faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] ["As opposed to modern University money wisdom."—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]
[2] [Matthew ii. 11. "Scent of Gods,—as opposed to Dante's smell of the pit."—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

# LETTER 6

## ELYSIAN FIELDS[1]

DENMARK HILL,
*1st June*, 1871.*

1. MY FRIENDS,—The main purpose of these letters having been stated in the last of them, it is needful that I should tell you why I approach the discussion of it in this so desultory way, writing (as it is too true that I must continue to write) "of things that you little care for, in words that you cannot easily understand."[2]

I write of things you care little for, knowing that what you least care for is, at this juncture, of the greatest moment to you.

And I write in words you are little likely to understand, because I have no wish (rather the contrary) to tell you anything that you can understand without taking trouble. You usually read so fast that you can catch nothing but the echo of your own opinions, which, of course, you are pleased to see in print. I neither wish

* I think it best to publish this letter as it was prepared for press on the morning of the 25th of last month, at Abingdon, before the papers of that day had reached me. You may misinterpret its tone, and think it is written without feeling; but I will endeavour to give you, in my next letter,[3] a brief statement of the meaning, to the French and to all other nations, of this war, and its results: in the meantime, trust me, there is probably no other man living to whom, in the abstract, and irrespective of loss of family and property, the ruin of Paris is so great a sorrow as it is to me.[4]

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[1] [For the title, see § 5 (p. 102).]
[2] [See Letter 5, § 1 (p. 79).]
[3] [See Letter 7, § 13 (p. 126).]
[4] [On May 25, 1871, the Government troops occupied Paris, and three days later the Communist rising was finally quelled. For other references to the Commune and the preceding siege by the Germans, see Vol. XVII. p. 135, and Vol. XX. pp. 199, 354.]

to please, nor displease you; but to provoke you to think; to lead you to think accurately; and help you to form, perhaps, some different opinions from those you have now.

2. Therefore, I choose that you shall pay me the price of two pots of beer, twelve times in the year, for my advice, each of you who wants it.[1] If you like to think of me as a quack doctor, you are welcome; and you may consider the large margins, and thick paper, and ugly pictures of my book, as my caravan, drum, and skeleton. You would probably, if invited in that manner, buy my pills; and I should make a great deal of money out of you; but being an honest doctor, I still mean you to pay me what you ought. You fancy, doubtless, that I write —as most other political writers do—my "opinions"; and that one man's opinion is as good as another's. You are much mistaken. When I only opine things, I hold my tongue; and work till I more than opine—until I know them. If the things prove unknowable, I, with final perseverance, hold my tongue about them, and recommend a like practice to other people. If the things prove knowable, as soon as I know them, I am ready to write about them, if need be; not till then.[2] That is what people call my "arrogance."[3] They write and talk themselves, habitually, of what they know nothing about; they cannot in anywise conceive the state of mind of a person who will not speak till he knows; and then tells them, serenely, "This is so; you may find it out for yourselves, if you choose; but, however little you may choose it, the thing is still so."

3. Now it has cost me twenty years of thought, and of hard reading, to learn what I have to tell you in these pamphlets; and you will find, if you choose to find, it is true; and may prove, if you choose to prove, that it is

[1] [For particulars of the original issue of these letters in monthly parts, see Bibliographical Note, above, p. xci.]

[2] [Compare Letters 11, § 19 (below, p. 195); 43, § 1; 44, § 3; 71, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 107, 128, 732); and 89, §§ 2, 7 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 399, 405). Compare also Vol. XIX. p. 89.]

[3] [Compare Letter 7, § 5 (p. 117).]

useful: and I am not in the least minded to compete for your audience with the "opinions" in your damp journals, morning and evening, the black of them coming off on your fingers, and—beyond all washing—into your brains. It is no affair of mine whether you attend to me or not; but yours wholly; my hand is weary of pen-holding—my heart is sick of thinking; for my own part, I would not write you these pamphlets though you would give me a barrel of beer, instead of two pints, for them:—I write them wholly for your sake; I choose that you shall have them decently printed on cream-coloured paper, and with a margin underneath, which you can write on, if you like. That is also for your sake: it is a proper form of book for any man to have who can keep his books clean; and if he cannot, he has no business with books at all. It costs me ten pounds to print a thousand copies, and five more to give you a picture; and a penny off my sevenpence to send you the book;—a thousand sixpences are twenty-five pounds; when you have bought a thousand *Fors* of me, I shall therefore have five pounds for my trouble—and my single shopman, Mr. Allen, five pounds for his;[1] we won't work for less, either of us; not that we would not, were it good for you; but it would be by no means good. And I mean to sell all my large books, henceforward, in the same way; well printed, well bound, and at a fixed price; and the trade may charge a proper and acknowledged profit for their trouble in retailing the book. Then the public will know what they are about, and so will tradesmen; I, the first producer, answer, to the best of my power, for the quality of the book;—paper, binding, eloquence, and all: the retail dealer charges what he ought to charge, openly; and if the public do not choose to give it, they can't get the book. That is what I call legitimate business. Then as for this misunderstanding of me—remember that it is really not easy to understand anything, which you have

[1] [Mr. Allen was not yet, however, Ruskin's sole publisher: see Vol. XVIII. pp. 9–11.]

not heard before, if it relates to a complex subject; also, it is quite easy to misunderstand things that you are hearing every day—which seem to you of the intelligiblest sort. But I *can* only write of things in my own way and as they come into my head; and of the things I care for, whether you care for them or not, as yet. I will answer for it, you must care for some of them, in time.

4. To take an instance close to my hand: you would of course think it little conducive to your interests that I should give you any account of the wild hyacinths which are opening in flakes of blue fire, this day, within a couple of miles of me, in the glades of Bagley wood through which the Empress Maud fled in the snow[1] (and which, by the way, I slink through, myself, in some discomfort, lest the gamekeeper of the college of the gracious Apostle St. John should catch sight of me; not that he would ultimately decline to make a distinction between a poacher and a professor, but that I dislike the trouble of giving an account of myself). Or, if even you would bear with a scientific sentence or two about them, explaining to you that they were only green leaves turned blue, and that it was of no consequence whether they were either green or blue; and that, as flowers, they were scientifically to be considered as not in existence,[2]—you will, I fear, throw my letter, even though it has cost you sevenpence, aside at once, when I remark to you that these wood-hyacinths of Bagley have something to do with the battle of Marathon, and if you knew it, are of more vital interest to you than even the Match Tax.[3]

5. Nevertheless, as I shall feel it my duty, some day,

[1] [See above, Letter 4, § 12 (p. 76).]

[2] [Compare Letter 5, § 5 (p. 83).]

[3] [The references are to the Match Tax—and stamp with the motto *Ex luce lucellum*—which Mr. Lowe proposed in the Budget of 1871 (*Times*, April 21), and which immediately caused great popular outcry (for another reference to the same Budget speech, see above, p. 81 *n.*); and to his speech at the Institution of Civil Engineers, in which, criticising the educational importance attached to "the literature and language of a people who have long since passed away," he said, "When I think of the celebrated battle of Marathon and all our school-boy enthusiasm about the 192 persons who perished on that occasion on the side of the

to speak to you of Theseus and his vegetable soup,[1] so, to-day, I think it necessary to tell you that the wood-hyacinth is the best English representative of the tribe of flowers which the Greeks called "Asphodel," and which they thought the heroes who had fallen in the battle of Marathon, or in any other battle, fought in just quarrel, were to be rewarded, and enough rewarded, by living in fields-full of;[2] fields called, by them, Elysian, or the Fields of Coming, as you and I talk of the good time "Coming," though with perhaps different views as to the nature of the to be expected goodness.

Now what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the other day to the Civil Engineers (see *Saturday Review*, April 29th[3]) is entirely true; namely, that in any of our colliery or cartridge-manufactory explosions, we send as many men (or women) into Elysium as were likely to get there after the battle of Marathon;* and that is, indeed, like the rest of our economic arrangements, very fine, and pleasant to think upon; neither may it be doubted, on modern principles of religion and equality, that every collier and cartridge-filler is as fit for Elysium as any heathen could be; and that in all these respects the battle of Marathon is no more deserving of English notice. But what I want you to reflect upon, as of moment to you, is

* Of course this was written, and in type, before the late catastrophe in Paris;[4] and the one at Dunkirk is, I suppose, long since forgotten, much more our own good beginning at—Birmingham—was it? I forget, myself, now.

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victorious, and compare it with the grand drama which has been enacted in another part of Europe within the last seven or eight months, I cannot help feeling how small were the matters to which our early attention was directed. Why, a good colliery accident, under the auspices of those professional gentlemen whom I see around me, would throw one of those great events of ancient times completely into the shade" (*Times*, April 24, 1871). For another reference to Mr. Lowe on the battle of Marathon, see Letter 80, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. p. 177).]

[1] [See below, p. 429 *n.*]

[2] [Compare Vol. XVI. p. 33 *n.* So Homer of the spirit of the son of Æacus, walking "along the mead of asphodel" (*Odyssey*, xi. 539).]

[3] [An article on "Mr. Lowe on the Battle of Marathon," vol. 31, p. 526.]

[4] [The explosion of a cartridge manufactory in the Champ de Mars, killing from 100 to 150 persons (*Times*, May 20, 1871). The explosion at Dunkirk is described in a letter in the *Times* of February 10, 1871.]

whether you *really* care for the hyacinthine Elysium you are going to? and if you do, why you should not live a little while in Elysium here, instead of waiting so patiently, and working so hardly, to be blown or flattened into it? The hyacinths will grow well enough on the top of the ground, if you will leave off digging away the bottom of it; and another plant of the asphodel species, which the Greeks thought of more importance even than hyacinths—onions;[1] though, indeed, one dead hero is represented by Lucian as finding something to complain of even in Elysium, because he got nothing but onions there to eat.[2] But it is simply, I assure you, because the French did not understand that hyacinths and onions were the principal things to fill their existing Elysian Fields, or Champs Elysées, with, but chose to have carriages, and roundabouts, instead, that a tax on matches in those fields would be, nowadays, so much more productive than one on Asphodel; and I see that only a day or two since even a poor Punch's show could not play out its play in Elysian peace, but had its corner knocked off by a shell from Mont Valérien, and the dog Toby "seriously alarmed."

6. One more instance of the things you don't care for, that are vital to you, may be better told now than hereafter.

In my plan for our practical work, in last number, you remember I said, we must try and make some pottery, and have some music, and that we would have no steam engines.[3] On this I received a singular letter from a resident at Birmingham, advising me that the colours for my pottery must be ground by steam, and my musical instruments constructed by it. To this, as my correspondent was an educated person, and knew Latin, I ventured

[1] [Compare the analysis of Classical Landscape in *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 235–236), where Ruskin notes the stress laid in the garden of Alcinous on beds of herbs, "chiefly leeks."]

[2] [This statement is not made in Lucian. Possibly Ruskin (connecting onions with asphodels) had in his mind a vague recollection of Περὶ Πένθους ("Of Mourning"), § 19: *οὐχ οὕτως ἄσπορος οὐδὲ ἄκαρπος ἡ τοῦ* Πλούτωνος *ἀρχὴ οὐδ' ἐπιλέλοιπεν ἡμᾶς ὁ ἀσφόδελος, ἵνα παρ' ὑμῶν τὰ σίτια μεταστελλώμεθα* ("Pluto's realm is not so barren, nor asphodel so scarce with us, that we must apply to you for provisions").]

[3] [See Letter 5, § 21 (p. 96).]

to answer that porcelain had been painted before the time of James Watt; that even music was not entirely a recent invention; that my poor company, I feared, would deserve no better colours than Apelles and Titian made shift with, or even the Chinese; and that I could not find any notice of musical instruments in the time of David, for instance, having been made by steam.

To this my correspondent again replied that he supposed David's "twangling upon the harp" would have been unsatisfactory to modern taste;[1] in which sentiment I concurred with him (thinking of the Cumberland procession, without dancing, after its sacred, cylindrical Ark).[2] We shall have to be content, however, for our part, with a little "twangling" on such roughly-made harps, or even shells, as the Jews and Greeks got their melody out of, though it must indeed be little conceivable in a modern manufacturing town that a nation could ever have existed which imaginarily dined on onions in Heaven, and made harps of the near relations of turtles on Earth.[3] But to keep to our crockery, you know I told you that for some time we should not be able to put any pictures of Gods on it; and you might think that would be of small consequence: but it is of moment that we should at least try—for indeed that old French potter, Palissy, was nearly the last of potters in France,[4] or England either, who could have done so, if anybody had wanted Gods.[5] But nobody in his time did;—they only wanted Goddesses, of a demi-divine-monde pattern; Palissy, not well able to produce such, took to moulding innocent frogs and vipers instead, in his dishes;[6] but at Sèvres and other places for shaping

[1] [For a later reference to this correspondent's remark, see Letter 57, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 405).]

[2] [See Letter 5, § 11 (pp. 88–89).]

[3] [The reference is to the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, where the poet describes how Hermes found a tortoise and recognised the soul of music in its shell. There is a representation of Hermes making the lyre on a bronze disk in the British Museum (see E. T. Cook's *Popular Handbook to the Greek and Roman Antiquities*, pp. 446–447).]

[4] [On Palissy ware, see Vol. XVI. p. 428.]

[5] [See Letter 5, § 21 (p. 96).]

[6] [Compare *St. Mark's Rest*, § 228 (Vol. XXIV. p. 388).]

of courtly clay, the charmingest things were done, as you probably saw at the great peace-promoting Exhibition of 1851; and not only the first rough potter's fields, tileries, as they called them, or Tuileries,[1] but the little den where Palissy long after worked under the Louvre, were effaced and forgotten in the glory of the House of France; until the House of France forgot also that to it, no less than the House of Israel, the words were spoken, not by a painted God, "As the clay is in the hands of the potter, so are ye in mine;"[2] and thus the stained and vitrified show of it lasted, as you have seen, until the Tuileries again became the Potter's field, to bury, not strangers in,[3] but their own souls, no more ashamed of Traitorhood, but invoking Traitorhood, as if it covered, instead of constituting, uttermost shame;—until, of the kingdom and its glory there is not a shard left, to take fire out of the hearth.[4]

7. Left—to men's eyes, I should have written. To their thoughts, is left yet much; for true kingdoms and true glories cannot pass away.[5] What France has had of such, remain to her. What any of us can find of such, will remain to us. Will you look back, for an instant, again to the end of my last Letter, § 21 [p. 96], and consider the state of life described there:—"No liberty, but instant obedience to known law and appointed persons; no equality, but recognition of every betterness and reprobation of every worseness; and none idle but the dead."

I beg you to observe that last condition especially. You will debate for many a day to come the causes that have brought this misery upon France, and there are many; but one is chief—chief cause, now and always, of evil everywhere; and I see it at this moment, in its deadliest form, out of the window of my quiet English inn. It is

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 153 (Vol. XX. p. 308 *n.*).]
[2] [Jeremiah xviii. 6.]
[3] [Matthew xxvii. 7.]
[4] [Isaiah xxx. 14.]
[5] [See Matthew xxiv. 35.]

the 21st of May, and a bright morning, and the sun shines, for once, warmly on the wall opposite, a low one, of ornamental pattern, imitative in brick of wood-work (as, if it had been of wood-work, it would, doubtless, have been painted to look like brick). Against this low decorative edifice leans a ruddy-faced English boy of seventeen or eighteen, in a white blouse and brown corduroy trousers, and a domical felt hat; with the sun, as much as can get under the rim, on his face, and his hands in his pockets; listlessly watching two dogs at play. He is a good boy, evidently, and does not care to turn the play into a fight;* still it is not interesting enough to him, as play, to relieve the extreme distress of his idleness, and he occasionally takes his hands out of his pockets, and claps them at the dogs, to startle them.

8. The ornamental wall he leans against surrounds the county police-office, and the residence at the end of it, appropriately called "Gaol Lodge." This county gaol, police-office, and a large gasometer, have been built by the good people of Abingdon to adorn the principal entrance to their town from the south. It was once quite one of the loveliest, as well as historically interesting, scenes in England. A few cottages and their gardens, sloping down to the river-side, are still left, and an arch or two of the great monastery; but the principal object, from the road, is now the gaol; and from the river, the gasometer. It is curious that since the English have believed (as you will find the editor of the *Liverpool Daily Post*, quoting to you from Macaulay, in his leader of the 9th of this month), "the only cure for Liberty is more liberty"[1] (which is true enough, for when you have got all you can, you will be past physic), they always make their gaols conspicuous and

* This was at seven in the morning; he had them fighting at half-past nine.

[1] [See Macaulay's essay on "Milton": "There is only one cure for the evils which newly acquired freedom produces; and that cure is freedom." For another reference to the newspaper article, see below, p. 118.]

ornamental. Now I have no objection, myself, detesting, as I do, every approach to liberty,[1] to a distinct manifestation of gaol, in proper quarters; nay, in the highest, and in the close neighbourhood of palaces;[2] perhaps, even, with a convenient passage, and Ponte de' Sospiri, from one to the other, or, at least, a pleasant access by water-gate and down the river; but I do not see why in these days of "incurable" liberty, the prospect in approaching a quiet English county town should be a gaol, and nothing else.

That being so, however, the country boy, in his white blouse, leans placidly against the prison wall this bright Sunday morning, little thinking what a luminous sign-post he is making of himself, and living gnomon of sun-dial, of which the shadow points sharply to the subtlest cause of the fall of France, and of England, as is too likely, after her.

9. Your hands in your own pockets, in the morning. That is the beginning of the last day; your hands in other people's pockets at noon; that is the height of the last day; and the gaol, ornamented or otherwise,—(assuredly the great gaol of the grave),—for the night. That is the history of nations under judgment. Don't think I say this to any single class; least of all specially to you; the rich are continually, nowadays, reproaching you with your wish to be idle. It is very wrong of you; but, do they want to work all day, themselves? All mouths are very properly open now against the Paris Communists because they fight that they may get wages for marching about with flags. What do the upper classes fight for, then? What have they fought for since the world became upper and lower, but that they also might have wages for walking about with flags, and that mischievously? It is very wrong of the Communists to steal church-plate and candlesticks. Very

[1] [Compare above, p. 96.]

[2] [Byron, *Childe Harold*, iv. 1:—

"I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand."]

had got into their heads that they were only to be looked at, for the honour of God, and not to light anybody.

10. Which is indeed too much the notion of even the masculine aristocracy of Europe at this day. One can imagine them, indeed, modest in the matter of their own luminousness, and more timid of the tax on agricultural horses and carts, than of that on lucifers;[1] but it would be well if they were content, here in England, however dimly phosphorescent themselves, to bask in the sunshine of May at the end of Westminster Bridge (as my boy on Abingdon Bridge[2]), with their backs against the large edifice they have built there,—an edifice, by the way, to my own poor judgment, less contributing to the adornment of London,[3] than the new police-office to that of Abingdon. But the English squire, after his fashion, sends himself to that highly decorated gaol all spring-time; and cannot be content with his hands in his own pockets, nor even in yours and mine; but claps and laughs, semi-idiot that he is, at dog-fights on the floor of the House, which, if he knew it, are indeed dog-fights of the Stars in their courses,[4] Sirius against Procyon;[5] and of the havoc and loosed dogs of war,[6] makes, as the *Times* correspondent says they make, at Versailles, of the siege of Paris, "the Entertainment of the Hour."[7]

You think that, perhaps, an unjust saying of him, as he will, assuredly, himself. He would fain put an end to this wild work, if he could, he thinks.

11. My friends, I tell you solemnly, the sin of it all, down to this last night's doing, or undoing (for it is

[1] [See above, Letters 5, § 4 *n.*, and 6, § 4 (pp. 81, 101).]
[2] [See above, § 7.]
[3] [See above, p. 15 *n.*]
[4] [Judges v. 20.]
[5] [Procyon (Horace, *Odes*, iii. 29, 18), or Antecanis, the star that rises before the dog-star (Sirius).]
[6] [*Julius Cæsar*, Act iii. sc. 1 ("Cry *Havoc*, and let slip the dogs of war").]
[7] [The reference is to the French siege of Paris, of May 1871. "Carriages are hired by the hour to carry parties out to Meudon, and the entertainment of the hour is to view the siege of Paris. The French people do not appear to view it in the serious light in which, to judge from the papers, it is regarded by foreigners at a distance" (*Times*, May 22, 1871).]

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Monday now, I waited before finishing my letter, to see if the Sainte Chapelle would follow the Vendôme Column[1]); the sin of it, I tell you, is not that poor rabble's, spade and pickaxe in hand among the dead;[2] nor yet the blasphemer's, making noise like a dog[3] by the defiled altars of our Lady of Victories;[4] and round the barricades, and the ruins, of the Street of Peace.

This cruelty has been done by the kindest of us, and the most honourable; by the delicate women, by the nobly-nurtured men, who through their happy and, as they thought, holy lives, have sought, and still seek, only "the entertainment of the hour." And this robbery has been taught to the hands,—this blasphemy to the lips,—of the lost poor, by the False Prophets who have taken the name of Christ in vain, and leagued themselves with His chief enemy, "Covetousness, which is idolatry."[5]

12. Covetousness, lady of Competition and of deadly Care; idol above the altars of Ignoble Victory; builder of streets, in cities of Ignoble Peace. I have given you the picture of her—your goddess and only Hope—as Giotto saw her:[6] dominant in prosperous Italy as in prosperous England, and having her hands clawed then, as now, so

[1] ["PARIS, *May* 16.—The *Journal Officiel* announced that the Vendôme Column would positively fall to-day at 2. A great concourse assembled. Bands played. The Commune, and their staff, attended on horseback. At 3.15 P.M. an attempt was made, which failed owing to the breaking of a snatch-block. The ropes slackened suddenly, injuring two men. Another attempt was made, and the Column fell about 10 minutes to 6. . . . The excitement was intense" (*Times*, May 17, 1871). For another reference to the demolition of the Vendôme Column, see Vol. XVI. p. 155, and *Rock Honeycomb*, note on line 188.]

[2] ["PARIS, *May* 18.—Bodies are being removed from the crypt of the Church of Les Petits Pères. Bones strew the pavement on both sides of the church door" (*Times*, May 19, 1871).]

[3] [Psalms lix. 6.]

[4] [Notre Dame des Victoires, a famous pilgrimage church in the Place des Victoires. The altar, to the right of the choir, which is the object of special veneration, was despoiled by the Communists. The *Times* of Monday, May 22, 1871, announced: "The Church of Notre Dame des Victoires has been sacked and occupied by the troops." See the *Daily Telegraph* of the same date for an account of the outrages. The barricade fighting in the Rue de la Paix and elsewhere was in progress at the same time.]

[5] [Colossians iii. 5.]

[6] [Plate II. (originally placed as frontispiece to this Letter); compare Vol. XXIV. p. 120.]

that she can only clutch, not work; also you shall read next month with me what one of Giotto's friends[1] says of her—a rude versifier, one of the twangling harpers;[2] as Giotto was a poor painter for low price, and with colours ground by hand; but such cheap work must serve our turn for this time; also, here, is portrayed for you * one of the ministering angels of the goddess; for she herself, having ears set wide to the wind, is careful to have wind-instruments provided by her servants for other people's ears.[3]

*Fig. 8*

13. This servant of hers was drawn by the court portrait-painter, Holbein; and was a councillor at poor-law boards, in his day; counselling then, as some of us have, since, "Bread of Affliction and Water of Affliction"[4] for the vagrant as such,—which is, indeed, good advice, if you are quite sure the vagrant has, or may have, a home; not otherwise. But we will talk further of this next month, taking into council one of Holbein's prosaic friends, as well as that singing friend of Giotto's—an English lawyer and

* Engraved, as also the woodcut in the April number,[5] carefully after Holbein, by my coal-waggon-assisting assistant:[6] but he has missed his mark somewhat, here; the imp's abortive hands, hooked processes only, like Envy's, and pterodactylous, are scarcely seen in their clutch of the bellows, and there are other faults. We will do it better for you, afterwards.[7]

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[1] [Dante: see *Purgatorio*, xiii., xiv.; but Ruskin does not in the next letter, nor later, refer to the passages. Among Dante's instances of the envious is the nymph Aglauros, who envied her sister Hersë (*Purg.*, xiv. 136-139). Ruskin promises some account of her in Letter 12, but does not give it (see below, p. 202): see, however, Vol. XIX. p. 334.]

[2] [See above, § 6, p. 104.]

[3] [Holbein's woodcut ("He that hath ears to hear let him hear"), from which this is enlarged, is given in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 176 (see Vol. XXII. p. 417, and Fig. 9). Ruskin's drawing is No. 73 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 81).]

[4] [1 Kings xxii. 27.]

[5] [Letter 4, § 12 (p. 78).]

[6] [Arthur Burgess: see Letter 2, § 13 (p. 38).]

[7] [See Letter 53, § 6 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 321), where Ruskin refers readers of *Fors* to the woodcut in *Ariadne*.]

country gentleman,[1] living on his farm, at Chelsea (somewhere near Cheyne Row, I believe)—and not unfrequently visited there by the King of England, who would ask himself unexpectedly to dinner at the little Thames-side farm, though the floor of it was only strewn with green rushes. It was burnt at last, rushes, ricks, and all; some said because bread of affliction and water of affliction[2] had been served to heretics there, its master being a stout Catholic; and, singularly enough, also a Communist; so that because of the fire, and other matters, the King at last ceased to dine at Chelsea. We will have some talk, however, with the farmer, ourselves, some day soon;[3] meantime and always, believe me,

Faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

## POSTSCRIPT

14. *25th May* (*early morning*).—Reuter's final telegram, in the *Echo* of last night, being "The Louvre and the Tuileries are in flames, the Federals having set fire to them with petroleum,"[4] it is interesting to observe how, in fulfilment of the Mechanical Glories of our age, its ingenious

[1] ["The King also used, of a particular love, to come on a sudden to Chelsey, where Sir Thomas More now lived, and leaning on his shoulder to talk with him of secret counsel in his garden, yea, and to dine with him upon no inviting" (*Life of Sir Thomas More*, by Cresacre More, 1828 edition, p. 59). "Neither mean nor subject to envy, yet magnificent enough" was Erasmus's description of the house. More, it will be remembered, was declared guilty of misprision of treason on account of his acquaintance with the "Nun of Kent." The rest of Ruskin's allusions are not clear, for though after More's execution the King confiscated his property, the house and grounds were presented by him to Sir William Pawlet, Marquis of Winchester. The house was not demolished till 1740 (see Lysons, *Environs of London*, 1795, vol. ii. pp. 79 *seq.*; and Cresacre More, p. 102 *n.*); the only remains of it, now extant, are some parts of the garden walls at the back of Paulton's Square and at the entrance of the Moravian burial-ground.]

[2] [1 Kings xxii. 27.]

[3] [See Letter 7, §§ 5, 6 (pp. 116–119).]

[4] [The *Times* correspondent announced next morning, however (May 26), that though the Tuileries was in ashes, "happily not very much of the Louvre is destroyed."]

Gomorrah manufactures, and supplies to demand, her own brimstone; achieving also a quite scientific, instead of miraculous, descent of it from Heaven; and ascent of it, where required, without any need of cleaving or quaking of earth, except in a superficially "vibratory"[1] manner.

Nor can it be less encouraging to you to see how, with a sufficiently curative quantity of Liberty,[2] you may defend yourselves against all danger of over-production, especially in art; but, in case you should ever wish to re-"produce" any of the combustibles (as oil, or canvas) used in these Parisian Economies, you will do well to inquire of the author of the *Essay on Liberty* whether he considers oil of linseed, or petroleum, as best fulfilling his definition, "utilities fixed and embodied in material objects."[3]

[1] [See above, § 9 (p. 108).]
[2] [See above, § 8 (p. 106).]
[3] [See Letter 4, §§ 5, 6 (pp. 64–66).]

CHARITY

Drawn thus by Giotto in the Chapel of the Arena at Padua

# LETTER 7

## CHARITAS[1]

DENMARK HILL,
*1st July*, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—It seldom chances, my work lying chiefly among stones, clouds, and flowers, that I am brought into any freedom of intercourse with my fellow-creatures; but since the fighting in Paris I have dined out several times, and spoken to the persons who sat next me, and to others when I went upstairs; and done the best I could to find out what people thought about the fighting, or thought they ought to think about it, or thought they ought to say. I had, of course, no hope of finding any one thinking what they ought to do. But I have not yet, a little to my surprise, met with any one who either appeared to be sadder, or professed himself wiser for anything that has happened.

It is true that I am neither sadder nor wiser, because of it, myself. But then I was so sad before, that nothing could make me sadder; and getting wiser has always been to me a very slow process (sometimes even quite stopping for whole days together), so that if two or three new ideas fall in my way at once, it only puzzles me; and the fighting in Paris has given me more than two or three.

2. The newest of all these new ones, and, in fact, quite a glistering and freshly minted idea to me, is the Parisian notion of Communism, as far as I understand it (which I

[1] [In his own copy Ruskin wrote "Charity" and "Charitas" (see below, § 13), and the latter is no doubt the true title, though the word has hitherto been misprinted "Charities."]

don't profess to do altogether, yet, or I should be wiser than I was, with a vengeance).

For, indeed, I am myself a Communist of the old school —reddest also of the red; and was on the very point of saying so at the end of my last letter; only the telegram about the Louvre's being on fire stopped me, because I thought the Communists of the new school, as I could not at all understand them, might not quite understand me. For we Communists of the old school think that our property belongs to everybody, and everybody's property to us; so of course I thought the Louvre belonged to me as much as to the Parisians, and expected they would have sent word over to me, being an Art Professor, to ask whether I wanted it burnt down. But no message or intimation to that effect ever reached me.

3. Then the next bit of new coinage in the way of notion which I have picked up in Paris streets, is the present meaning of the French word "Ouvrier," which in my time the dictionaries used to give as "Workman," or "Working-man." For again, I have spent many days, not to say years, with the working-men of our English school myself;[1] and I know that, with the more advanced of them, the gathering word is that which I gave you at the end of my second number [p. 44]—"To do good work, whether we live or die." Whereas I perceive the gathering, or rather scattering, word of the French "ouvrier" is, "To *undo* good work, whether we live or die."

4. And this is the third, and the last, I will tell you for the present, of my new ideas, but a troublesome one: namely, that we are henceforward to have a duplicate power of political economy; and that the new Parisian expression for its first principle is not to be "laissez faire," but "laissez *re*faire."

5. I cannot, however, make anything of these new French fashions of thought till I have looked at them

[1] [For Ruskin's connexion with the Working Men's College, see Vol. V. pp. xxxvi. *seq.*]

quietly a little; so to-day I will content myself with telling you what we Communists of the old school meant by Communism; and it will be worth your hearing, for—I tell you simply in my "arrogant" way[1]—we know, and have known, what Communism is—for our fathers knew it, and told us, three thousand years ago;[2] while you baby Communists do not so much as know what the name means, in your own English or French—no, not so much as whether a House of Commons implies, or does not imply, also a House of Uncommons; nor whether the Holiness of the Commune, which Garibaldi came to fight for,[3] had any relation to the Holiness of the "Communion" which he came to fight against.

6. Will you be at the pains, now, however, to learn rightly, and once for all, what Communism is? First, it means that everybody must work in common, and do common or simple work for his dinner;[4] and that if any man will not do it, he must not have his dinner.* That much, perhaps, you thought you knew?—but you did not think we Communists of the old school knew it also? You shall have it, then, in the words of the Chelsea farmer and stout Catholic, I was telling you of, in last number.[5] He was born in Milk Street, London, three hundred and ninety-one years ago (1480, a year I have just been telling my Oxford pupils to remember for manifold reasons[6]), and he planned a Commune flowing with milk and honey, and otherwise Elysian; and called it the "Place of Wellbeing," or Utopia;[7] which is a word you perhaps have occasionally

* *Cf.* Letter 28, § 22, Question 10 [p. 526].—*Note in Author's Index to Vols. I. and II.*

[1] [Compare Letter 6, § 2 (p. 99).]

[2] [Ruskin has here in mind early Greek society—as depicted in Plutarch's Lives of Lycurgus (§§ 8, 9) and of Theseus, with his meals in common: compare below, p. 396, where Ruskin dates Theseus "three thousand years ago."]

[3] [Compare Letter 1, § 5 (p. 16).]

[4] [2 Thessalonians iii. 10 ("if any man would not work, neither should he eat").]

[5] [Sir Thomas More: see Letter 6, § 13 (p. 113).]

[6] [See *Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, § 8 (Vol. XXII. p. 82).]

[7] [More called it rather *οὐτοπος*, nowhere; "Nusquama," as he calls it sometimes in his letters.]

used before now, like others, without understanding it;—(in the article of the *Liverpool Daily Post* before referred to,[1] it occurs felicitously seven times). You shall use it in that stupid way no more, if I can help it. Listen how matters really are managed there.[2]

"The chief, and almost the only business of the government,* is to take care that no man may live idle, but that every one may follow his trade diligently: yet they do not wear themselves out with perpetual toil from morning till night, as if they were beasts of burden, which, as it is indeed a heavy slavery, so it is everywhere the common course of life amongst all mechanics except the Utopians; but they, dividing the day and night into twenty-four hours, appoint six of these for work, three of which are before dinner and three after; they then sup, and, at eight o'clock, counting from noon, go to bed and sleep eight hours: the rest of their time, besides that taken up in work, eating, and sleeping, is left to every man's discretion; yet they are not to abuse that interval to luxury and idleness, but must employ it in some proper exercise, according to their various inclinations, which is, for the most part, reading.

"But the time appointed for labour is to be narrowly examined, otherwise, you may imagine that, since there are only six hours appointed for work, they may fall under a scarcity of necessary provisions: but it is so far from being true that this time is not sufficient for supplying them with plenty of all things, either necessary or convenient, that it is rather too much; and this you will easily apprehend, if you consider how great a part of all other nations is quite idle. First, women generally do little, who are the half of mankind; and, if some few women are diligent, their husbands are idle: then,— . . ."

What then?

We will stop a minute, friends, if you please, for I want you before you read what then, to be once more made fully aware that this farmer who is speaking to you is one of the sternest Roman Catholics of his stern time;

* I spare you, for once, a word for "government" used by this old author, which would have been unintelligible to you, and is so, except in its general sense, to me, too.[3]

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[1] [See Letter 6, § 8 (p 106).]

[2] [Ruskin here translates and compresses from the original Latin of the second book of *Utopia* (see pp. 83–86 of Arber's reprint of 1869 of the English edition of 1556).]

[3] [The magistrates are, says More, called "in the old language of the Utopians," "Syphograuntes," and this is the word here rendered "government" by Ruskin. The word may have been intended for nothing more than unintelligible jargon. It has, however, been suggested that in inventing the first part of the word, More was thinking of σῦφος, "a sty," and of the Benchers and Steward (Sty-ward) of his old Inn of Court (see J. H. Lupton's edition of *Utopia*, 1895, p. 135 n.).]

and at the fall of Cardinal Wolsey, became Lord High Chancellor of England in his stead.

"—then, consider the great company of idle priests, and of those that are called religious men; add to these, all rich men, chiefly those that have estates in land, who are called noblemen and gentlemen, together with their families, made up of idle persons, that are kept more for show than use; add to these, all those strong and lusty beggars that go about, pretending some disease in excuse for their begging; and, upon the whole account, you will find that the number of those by whose labours mankind is supplied is much less than you, perhaps, imagined: then, consider how few of those that work are employed in labours that are of real service! for we, who measure all things by money, give rise to many trades that are both vain and superfluous, and serve only to support riot and luxury: for if those who work were employed only in such things as the conveniences of life require, there would be such an abundance of them, *that the prices of them would so sink that tradesmen could not be maintained by their gains;*"

—(italics mine—Fair and softly, Sir Thomas! we must have a shop round the corner, and a pedlar or two on fair-days, yet);—

"if all those who labour about useless things were set to more profitable employments, and if all that languish out their lives in sloth and idleness (every one of whom consumes as much as any two of the men that are at work) were forced to labour, you may easily imagine that a small proportion of time would serve for doing all that is either necessary, profitable, or pleasant to mankind, especially while pleasure is kept within its due bounds: this appears very plainly in Utopia; for there, in a great city, and in all the territory that lies round it, you can scarce find five hundred, either men or women, by their age and strength capable of labour, that are not engaged in it! even the heads of government, though excused by the law, yet do not excuse themselves, but work, that, by their examples, they may excite the industry of the rest of the people."

7. You see, therefore, that there is never any fear, among us of the old school, of being out of work; but there is great fear, among many of us, lest we should not do the work set us well; for, indeed, we thorough-going Communists make it a part of our daily duty to consider how common we are; and how few of us have any brains or souls worth speaking of, or fit to trust to;—that being the, alas, almost unexceptionable lot of human creatures. Not that we think ourselves (still less, call ourselves without thinking so) miserable sinners, for we are not in

anywise miserable, but quite comfortable for the most part; and we are not sinners, that we know of; but are leading godly, righteous, and sober lives, to the best of our power, since last Sunday (on which day some of us were, we regret to be informed, drunk); but we are of course common creatures enough, the most of us, and thankful if we may be gathered up in St. Peter's sheet, so as not to be uncivilly or unjustly called unclean too.[1] And therefore our chief concern is to find out any among us wiser and of better make than the rest, and to get them, if they will for any persuasion take the trouble, to rule over us, and teach us how to behave, and make the most of what little good is in us.

8. So much for the first law of old Communism, respecting work. Then the second respects property, and it is that the public, or common, wealth, shall be more and statelier in all its substance than private or singular wealth; that is to say (to come to my own special business for a moment) that there shall be only cheap and few pictures, if any, in the insides of houses, where nobody but the owner can see them; but costly pictures, and many, on the outsides of houses, where the people can see them:[2] also that the Hôtel-de-Ville, or Hotel of the whole Town, for the transaction of its common business, shall be a magnificent building, much rejoiced in by the people, and with its tower seen far away through the clear air; but that the hotels for private business or pleasure, cafés, taverns, and the like, shall be low, few, plain, and in back streets; more especially such as furnish singular and uncommon drinks and refreshments; but that the fountains which furnish the people's common drink shall be very lovely and stately, and adorned with precious marbles, and the like. Then farther, according to old Communism, the private dwellings of uncommon persons—dukes and lords—are to be very simple, and roughly put together,—such persons being

[1] [See Acts x. 11.]
[2] [Compare *Two Paths*, § 74 (Vol. XVI. p. 320).]

supposed to be above all care for things that please the commonalty; but the buildings for public or common service, more especially schools, almshouses, and workhouses, are to be externally of a majestic character, as being for noble purposes and charities; and in their interiors furnished with many luxuries for the poor and sick. And, finally and chiefly, it is an absolute law of old Communism that the fortunes of private persons should be small, and of little account in the State; but the common treasure of the whole nation should be of superb and precious things in redundant quantity, as pictures, statues, precious books; gold and silver vessels, preserved from ancient times; gold and silver bullion laid up for use, in case of any chance need of buying anything suddenly from foreign nations; noble horses, cattle, and sheep, on the public lands; and vast spaces of land for culture, exercise, and garden, round the cities, full of flowers, which, being everybody's property, nobody could gather; and of birds which, being everybody's property, nobody could shoot. And, in a word, that instead of a common poverty, or national debt, which every poor person in the nation is taxed annually to fulfil his part of, there should be a common wealth, or national reverse of debt, consisting of pleasant things, which every poor person in the nation should be summoned to receive his dole of, annually; and of pretty things, which every person capable of admiration, foreigners as well as natives, should unfeignedly admire, in an æsthetic, and not a covetous manner (though for my own part I can't understand what it is that I am taxed now to defend, or what foreign nations are supposed to covet, here). But truly, a nation that has got anything to defend of real public interest, can usually hold it; and a fat Latin Communist gave for sign of the strength of his commonalty, in its strongest time,—

> "Privatus illis census erat brevis,
> Commune magnum;"[1]

[1] [Horace, *Odes*, ii. xv. 13.]

which you may get any of your boys or girls to translate for you, and remember; remembering, also, that the commonalty or publicity depends for its goodness on the nature of the *thing* that is common, and that is public. When the French cried, "Vive la République!" after the battle of Sedan, they were thinking only of the Publique, in the word, and not of the Re in it. But that is the essential part of it, for that "Re" is not like the mischievous Re in Reform, and Refaire,[1] which the words had better be without; but it is short for *res*, which means "thing"; and when you cry, "Live the Republic," the question is mainly, what thing it is you wish to be publicly alive, and whether you are striving for a Common-Wealth, and Public-Thing; or, as too plainly in Paris, for a Common-Illth,[2] and Public-Nothing, or even Public-Less-than-nothing and Common Deficit.

9. Now all these laws respecting public and private property, are accepted in the same terms by the entire body of us Communists of the old school; but with respect to the management of both, we old Reds fall into two classes, differing, not indeed in colour of redness, but in depth of tint of it—one class being, as it were, only of a delicately pink, peach-blossom, or dog-rose redness; but the other, to which I myself do partly, and desire wholly, to belong, as I told you, reddest of the red—that is to say, full crimson, or even dark crimson, passing into that deep colour of the blood which made the Spaniards call it blue,[3] instead of red, and which the Greeks call φοινίκεος,[4] being an intense phœnix or flamingo colour: and this not merely, as in the flamingo feathers, a colour on the outside, but going through and through, ruby-wise; so that Dante, who is one

[1] [See above, § 4 (p. 116).]

[2] [For Ruskin's coinage of the word "Illth," see *Unto this Last*, § 64 (Vol. XVII. p. 89).]

[3] ["Blue blood" and "true blue" being originally Spanish phrases, the old families of Spain who trace their pedigree beyond the time of the Moorish Conquest claiming that they have *venas ceruleas*, whereas the blood in the veins of the common people is black.]

[4] [On this word, see *Queen of the Air*, § 91 (Vol. XIX. p. 380).]

of the few people who have ever beheld our queen[1] full in the face, says of her that, if she had been in a fire, he could not have seen her at all, so fire-colour she was, all through.*

And between these two sects or shades of us, there is this difference in our way of holding our common faith (that our neighbour's property is ours, and ours his), namely, that the rose-red division of us are content in their diligence of care to preserve or guard from injury or loss their neighbours' property, as their own; so that they may be called, not merely dog-rose red, but even "watch-dog-rose" red; being, indeed, more careful and anxious for the safety of the possessions of other people (especially their masters) than for any of their own; and also more sorrowful for any wound or harm suffered by any creature in their sight, than for hurt to themselves. So that they are Communists, even less in their having part in all common well-being of their neighbours, than part in all common pain: being yet, on the whole, infinite gainers; for there is in this world infinitely more joy than pain to be shared, if you will only take your share when it is set for you.

10. The vermilion, or Tyrian-red sect of us, however, are not content merely with this carefulness and watchfulness over our neighbours' goods, but we cannot rest unless we are giving what we can spare of our own; and the more precious it is, the more we want to divide it with somebody. So that above all things, in what we value most of possessions, pleasant sights, and true knowledge, we cannot relish seeing any pretty things unless other people see them also; neither can we be content to know anything for

* "Tanto rossa, ch' appena fora dentro al fuoco nota."—*Purg.*, xxix. 122.[2]

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[1] [Charity: see below, § 17.]

[2] ["So ruddy, that her form had scarce
Been known within a furnace of clear flame."
—Cary's translation.]

ourselves, but must contrive, somehow, to make it known to others.

And as thus especially we like to give knowledge away, so we like to have it good to give (for, as for selling knowledge, thinking it comes by the spirit of Heaven, we hold the selling of it to be only a way of selling God again, and utterly Iscariot's business); also, we know that the knowledge made up for sale is apt to be watered and dusted, or even itself good for nothing; and we try, for our part, to get it, and give it, pure: the mere fact that it is to be given away at once to anybody who asks to have it, and immediately wants to use it, is a continual check upon us. For instance, when Colonel North, in the House of Commons, on the 20th of last month (as reported in the *Times*), "would simply observe, in conclusion, that it was impossible to tell how many thousands of the young men who were to be embarked for India next September, would be marched, not to the hills, but to their graves;"[1] any of us Tyrian-reds "would simply observe" that the young men themselves ought to be constantly, and on principle, informed of their destination before embarking; and that this pleasant communicativeness of what knowledge on the subject was to be got, would soon render quite possible the attainment of more. So also, in abstract science, the instant habit of making true discoveries common property, cures us of a bad trick which one may notice to have much hindered scientific persons lately, of rather spending their time in hiding their neighbours' discoveries, than improving their own:[2] whereas, among us, scientific flamingoes are not only openly graced for discoveries, but openly disgraced for coveries; and that sharply and permanently; so that there is rarely a hint or thought among them of

[1] [Speech by Colonel J. S. North (M.P. for Oxfordshire) on the Army Regulation Bill on June 19 (reported in the *Times* of June 20, 1871). Colonel North was objecting to the inclusion in the drafts for India of soldiers under the age of twenty-one.]

[2] [On this subject, see *Love's Meinie*, § 65 *n.* (Vol. XXV. p. 59); and compare Letters 34, § 17 (below, p. 642) and 85, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 318).]

each other's being wrong, but quick confession of whatever is found out rightly.*

11. But the point in which we dark-red Communists differ most from other people is, that we dread, above all things, getting miserly of virtue; and if there be any in us, or among us, we try forthwith to get it made common, and would fain hear the mob crying for some of that treasure, where it seems to have accumulated. I say, "seems," only: for though, at first, all the finest virtue looks as if it were laid up with the rich (so that, generally, a millionaire would be much surprised at hearing that his daughter had made a *petroleuse* of herself, or that his son had murdered anybody for the sake of their watch and cravat),—it is not at all clear to us dark-reds that this virtue, proportionate to income, is of the right sort; and we believe that even if it were, the people who keep it thus all to themselves, and leave the so-called *canaille* without any, vitiate what they keep by keeping it, so that it is like manna laid up through the night, which breeds worms in the morning.[1]

12. You see, also, that we dark-red Communists, since we exist only in giving, must, on the contrary, hate with a perfect hatred all manner of thieving: even to Cœur-de-Lion's tar-and-feather extreme;[2] and of all thieving, we dislike thieving on trust most (so that, if we ever get to be strong enough to do what we want, and chance to catch hold of any failed bankers, their necks will not be

* Confession always a little painful, however; scientific envy being the most difficult of all to conquer. I find I did much injustice to the botanical lecturer, as well as to my friend, in my last letter;[3] and, indeed, suspected as much at the time; but having some botanical notions myself, which I am vain of, I wanted the lecturer's to be wrong, and stopped cross-examining my friend as soon as I had got what suited me. Nevertheless, the general statement that follows, remember, rests on no tea-table chat; and the tea-table chat itself is accurate, as far as it goes.

[1] [Exodus xvi. 20.]
[2] [See Letter 3, § 11 (p. 55).]
[3] [Not *last* letter, but Letter 5, §§ 5, 6, 7 (pp. 82–85).]

worth half-an-hour's purchase[1]). So also, as we think virtue diminishes in the honour and force of it in proportion to income, we think vice increases in the force and shame of it, and is worse in kings and rich people than in poor; and worse on a large scale than on a narrow one; and worse when deliberate than hasty. So that we can understand one man's coveting a piece of vineyard-ground for a garden of herbs, and stoning the master of it (both of them being Jews);—and yet the dogs ate queen's flesh for that, and licked king's blood![2] but for two nations—both Christian—to covet their neighbours' vineyards, all down beside the River of their border, and slay until the River itself runs red! The little pool of Samaria!—shall all the snows of the Alps, or the salt pool of the Great Sea, wash their armour, for these?

13. I promised in my last letter[3] that I would tell you the main meaning and bearing of the war, and its results to this day:—now that you know what Communism is, I can tell you these briefly, and, what is more to the purpose, how to bear yourself in the midst of them.

The first reason for all wars, and for the necessity of national defences, is that the majority of persons, high and low, in all European nations, are Thieves, and, in their hearts, greedy of their neighbours' goods, land, and fame.

But besides being Thieves, they are also fools, and have never yet been able to understand that if Cornish men want pippins cheap, they must not ravage Devonshire—that the prosperity of their neighbours is, in the end, their own also;[4] and the poverty of their neighbours, by the communism of God, becomes also in the end their own. "Invidia," jealousy of your neighbour's good, has been, since dust was first made flesh, the curse of man;[5] and "Charitas," the desire to do your neighbour grace, the one source of all human glory, power, and material Blessing.

[1] [Compare, below, p. 131; and Letter 48, § 19 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 220).]
[2] [See 1 Kings xxi. and xxii.; 2 Kings ix.]
[3] [See above, p. 98 *n.*]
[4] [See, for this as applied to Ireland, Vol. XXVI. p. 295 *n.*]
[5] [On this subject, compare Letter 62, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 518).]

But war between nations (fools and thieves though they be) is not necessarily in all respects evil. I gave you that long extract from Froissart[1] to show you, mainly, that Theft in its simplicity—however sharp and rude, yet if frankly done, and bravely—does not corrupt men's souls; and they can, in a foolish, but quite vital and faithful way, keep the feast of the Virgin Mary in the midst of it.[2]

But Occult Theft,—Theft which hides itself even from itself, and is legal, respectable, and cowardly,—corrupts the body and soul of man, to the last fibre of them. And the guilty Thieves of Europe, the real sources of all deadly war in it, are the Capitalists[3]—that is to say, people who live by percentages on the labour of others; instead of by fair wages for their own. The *Real* war in Europe, of which this fighting in Paris is the Inauguration, is between these and the workman, such as these have made him. They have kept him poor, ignorant, and sinful, that they might, without his knowledge, gather for themselves the produce of his toil. At last, a dim insight into the fact of this dawns on him; and such as they have made him he meets them, and *will* meet.

14. Nay, the time is even come when he will study that Meteorological question, suggested by the *Spectator*, formerly quoted, of the Filtration of Money from above downwards.[4]

"It was one of the many delusions of the Commune" (says to-day's *Telegraph*, 24th June) "that it could do without rich consumers."[5] Well, such unconsumed existence would be very wonderful! Yet it is, to me also, conceivable. Without the riches,—no; but without the consumers?—possibly! It is occurring to the minds of the workmen that these Golden Fleeces must get their dew

[1] [See Letter 4, § 10 (p. 72).]
[2] [Compare Letters 14, § 1; 22, § 20; 31, § 15 (pp. 243, 385, 577).]
[3] [Compare *Unto this Last*, § 76 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 103).]
[4] [See Letter 4, § 9 (p. 70).]
[5] [For a later reference to this passage, see below, p. 384.]

from somewhere. "Shall there be dew upon the fleece only?"[1] they ask:—and will be answered. They cannot do without these long purses, say you? No; but they want to find where the long purses are filled. Nay, even their trying to burn the Louvre,[2] without reference to Art Professors, had a ray of meaning in it—quite Spectatorial.

"If we must choose between a Titian and a Lancashire cotton-mill" (wrote the *Spectator* of August 6th, last year, instructing me in political economy, just as the war was beginning), "in the name of manhood and morality, give us the cotton-mill."[3]

So thinks the French workman also, energetically; only *his* mill is not to be in Lancashire. Both French and English agree to have no more Titians,—it is well,—but which is to have the Cotton-Mill?

15. Do you see in the *Times* of yesterday and the day before, 22nd and 23rd June, that the Minister of France dares not, even in this her utmost need, put on an income-tax; and do you see why he dares not?[4]

Observe, such a tax is the only honest and just one; because it tells on the rich in true proportion to the poor, and because it meets necessity in the shortest and bravest way, and without interfering with any commercial operation.

All rich people object to income-tax, of course;—they like to pay as much as a poor man pays on their tea, sugar, and tobacco,—nothing on their incomes.

Whereas, in true justice, the only honest and wholly right tax is one not merely on income, but property; increasing in percentage as the property is greater. And the

[1] [Judges vi. 37.]

[2] [See above, p. 113.]

[3] [Compare Letter 27, § 12 (p. 500); Letters 45, § 2, and 46, § 18 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 146, 186); Letter 76, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 91); *Academy Notes*, 1875 (Vol. XIV. p. 302); and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 139 (Vol. XX. p. 297).]

[4] [M. Thiers, in making his Budget statement, "declared that he would never associate his name with the establishment of an Income Tax in France" (*Times*, June 22, 1871). The Special Correspondent of the paper, in a letter published on the following day, described the deep-rooted objection felt by the French people to the disclosures required by an income tax, and to the certainty that if it were instituted, false returns would be made. See below, p. 139.]

main virtue of such a tax is that it makes publicly known what every man has, and how he gets it.[1]

For every kind of Vagabonds, high and low, agree in their dislike to give an account of the way they get their living; still less, of how much they have got sewn up in their breeches. It does not, however, matter much to a country that it should know how its poor Vagabonds live; but it is of vital moment that it should know how its rich Vagabonds live; and that much of knowledge, it seems to me, in the present state of our education, is quite attainable. But that, when you have attained it, you may act on it wisely, the first need is that you should be sure you are living honestly yourselves. That is why I told you, in my second letter, you must learn to obey good laws before you seek to alter bad ones:—I will amplify now a little the three promises I want you to make. Look back at them.[2]

16. (I.) You are to do good work, whether you live or die. It may be you will have to die;—well, men have died for their country often, yet doing her no good; be ready to die for her in doing her assured good: her, and all other countries with her. Mind your own business with your absolute heart and soul; but see that it is a good business first. That it *is* corn and sweet pease you are producing,—not gunpowder and arsenic. And be sure of this, literally:—*you must simply rather die than make any destroying mechanism or compound.* You are to be *literally* employed in cultivating the ground, or making useful things, and carrying them where they are wanted. Stand in the streets, and say to all who pass by: Have you any vineyard we can work in,—*not* Naboth's?[3] In your powder and petroleum manufactory, we work no more.

17. I have said little to you yet of any of the pictures engraved—you perhaps think, not to the ornament of my book.

[1] [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 147 (Vol. XVIII. p. 505).]
[2] [See Letter 2, § 22 (p. 44).]
[3] [See 1 Kings xxi.]

Be it so. You will find them better than ornaments in time. Notice, however, in the one I give you with this letter—the "Charity" of Giotto—the Red Queen of Dante,[1] and ours also,—how different his thought of her is from the common one.

Usually she is nursing children, or giving money. Giotto thinks there is little charity in nursing children;—bears and wolves do that for their little ones; and less still in giving money.

His Charity tramples upon bags of gold—has no use for them. She gives only corn and flowers; and God's angel gives *her*, not even these—but a Heart.*

Giotto is quite literal in his meaning, as well as figurative. Your love is to give food and flowers, and to labour for them only.

18. But what are we to do against powder and petroleum, then? What men may do; not what poisonous beasts may. If a wretch spit in your face, will you answer by spitting in his?—if he throw vitriol at you, will you go to the apothecary for a bigger bottle?

There is no physical crime at this day, so far beyond pardon,—so without parallel in its untempted guilt, as the making of war-machinery, and invention of mischievous substance. Two nations may go mad, and fight like harlots —God have mercy on them;—you, who hand them carving-knives off the table, for leave to pick up a dropped sixpence, what mercy is there for *you?* We are so humane, forsooth, and so wise; and our ancestors had tar-barrels for witches; *we* will have them for everybody else, and drive the witches' trade ourselves, by daylight; we will have our cauldrons, please Hecate, cooled (according to the

* I do not doubt I read the action wrong; she is *giving* her heart to God, while she gives gifts to men.—*Author's Index to Vols. I. and II.*[2]

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[1] [See above, § 9; and compare Letter 41, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 80).]

[2] [Compare *Mornings in Florence*, § 94 (Vol. XXIII. p. 388), and *Giotto and his Works in Padua* (Vol. XXIV. p. 118).]

Darwinian theory) with baboon's blood,[1] and enough of it, and sell hell-fire in the open street.

19. (II.) Seek to revenge no injury. You see now—do not you—a little more clearly why I wrote that? what strain there is on the untaught masses of you to revenge themselves, even with insane fire?

Alas, the Taught masses are strained enough also;—have you not just seen a great religious and reformed nation, with its goodly Captains,—philosophical, sentimental, domestic, evangelical-angelical-minded altogether, and with its Lord's Prayer really quite vital to it,—come and take its neighbour nation by the throat, saying, "Pay me that thou owest"?[2]

Seek to revenge no injury: I do not say, seek to punish no crime: look what I hinted about failed bankers.[3] Of that hereafter.[4]

20. (III.) Learn to obey good laws; and in a little while you will reach the better learning—how to obey good Men, who are living, breathing, unblinded law; and to subdue base and disloyal ones, recognizing in these the light, and ruling over those in the power of the Lord of Light and Peace, whose Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, and His Kingdom from generation to generation.[5]

Ever faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] [Compare *Macbeth*, Act iv. sc. 1.]
[2] [Matthew xviii. 28. The reference is to the indemnity of 5 milliard francs included by Prussia in the preliminaries of peace (February 1871).]
[3] [See above, § 12.]
[4] [See below, p. 473.]
[5] [Daniel iv. 3.]

# LETTER 8

## NOT AS THE WORLD GIVETH[1]

1. My Friends,—I begin this letter a month before it is wanted,* having several matters in my mind that I would fain put into words at once. It is the first of July, and I sit down to write by the dismallest light that ever yet I wrote by; namely, the light of this midsummer morning, in mid-England (Matlock, Derbyshire), in the year 1871.

For the sky is covered with grey cloud;—not rain-cloud, but a dry black veil, which no ray of sunshine can pierce; partly diffused in mist, feeble mist, enough to make distant objects unintelligible, yet without any substance, or wreathing, or colour of its own.[2] And everywhere the leaves of the trees are shaking fitfully, as they do before a thunderstorm; only not violently, but enough to show the passing to and fro of a strange, bitter, blighting wind. Dismal enough, had it been the first morning of its kind that summer had sent. But during all this spring, in London, and at Oxford, through meagre March, through changelessly

* I have since been ill,[3] and cannot thoroughly revise my sheets; but my good friend Mr. Robert Chester,[4] whose keen reading has saved me many a blunder ere now, will, I doubt not, see me safely through the pinch.

[1] [John xiv. 27. For the title, see below, § 6.]

[2] ["*Cf.* Letter 12, § 8" (p. 203).—*MS. note in Author's copy.* The present is the earliest passage in which Ruskin describes the "storm-cloud" and "plague-wind": see in a later volume *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* (1884), § 29, where Ruskin refers to this notice of the phenomenon, and quotes § 1 (from "It is the first of July") and § 2 (down to "displeased enough"). For further notices of it, see Letter 29, § 1 (p. 527); also Letters 53, § 1, and 59, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 317, 443).]

[3] [For Ruskin's illness at Matlock in 1871, see Vol. XXII. p. xviii.]

[4] [The reader at Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.'s printing office, then in Old Bailey.]

sullen April, through despondent May, and darkened June, morning after morning has come grey-shrouded thus.

And it is a new thing to me, and a very dreadful one. I am fifty years old, and more; and since I was five, have gleaned the best hours of my life in the sun of spring and summer mornings; and I never saw such as these, till now.

And the scientific men are busy as ants, examining the sun, and the moon, and the seven stars, and can tell me all about *them*, I believe, by this time; and how they move, and what they are made of.

And I do not care, for my part, two copper spangles how they move, nor what they are made of. I can't move them any other way than they go, nor make them of anything else, better than they are made. But I would care much and give much, if I could be told where this bitter wind comes from, and what *it* is made of.

For, perhaps, with forethought, and fine laboratory science, one might make it of something else.

2. It looks partly as if it were made of poisonous smoke; very possibly it may be: there are at least two hundred furnace chimneys in a square of two miles on every side of me. But mere smoke would not blow to and fro in that wild way. It looks more to me as if it were made of dead men's souls—such of them as are not gone yet where they have to go, and may be flitting hither and thither, doubting, themselves, of the fittest place for them.

You know, if there *are* such things as souls, and if ever any of them haunt places where they have been hurt, there must be many about us, just now, displeased enough![1]

You may laugh, if you like. I don't believe any one of you would like to live in a room with a murdered man in the cupboard, however well preserved chemically;—even with a sunflower growing out at the top of his head.

And I don't, myself, like living in a world with such a multitude of murdered men in the ground of it—though

[1] ["The last sentence refers of course to the battles of the Franco-German campaign" (says Ruskin in *The Storm-Cloud*, § 29).]

we *are* making heliotropes of them, and scientific flowers, that study the sun.[1]

I wish the scientific men would let me and other people study it with our own eyes, and neither through telescopes nor heliotropes. You shall, at all events, study the rain a little, if not the sun, to-day, and settle that question we have been upon so long as to where it comes from.

8. All France, it seems, is in a state of enthusiastic delight and pride at the unexpected facility with which she has got into debt;[2] and Monsieur Thiers is congratulated by all our wisest papers on his beautiful statesmanship of borrowing. I don't myself see the cleverness of it, having suffered a good deal from that kind of statesmanship in private persons: but I daresay it is as clever as anything else that statesmen do, nowadays; only it happens to be more mischievous than most of their other doings, and I want you to understand the bearings of it.

Everybody in France who has got any money is eager to lend it to M. Thiers at five per cent. No doubt; but who is to pay the five per cent.? It is to be "raised" by duties on this and that. Then certainly the persons who get the five per cent. will have to pay some part of these duties themselves, on their own tea and sugar, or whatever else is taxed; and this taxing will be on the whole of their trade, and on whatever they buy with the rest of their fortunes;* but the five per cent. only on what they lend M. Thiers.

* "The charge on France for the interest of the newly-created debt, for the amount advanced by the Bank, and for the annual repayments—in short, for the whole additional burdens which the war has rendered necessary—is substantially to be met by increased Customs and Excise duties. The two principles which seem to have governed the selection of these imposts are, to extort the largest amount of money as it is leaving the hand of the purchaser, and to enforce the same process as the cash is falling into the hand of the native vendor; the results being to burden the consumer

[1] [The name heliotrope (*ἡλιοτρόπιον*), now applied to the fragrant H. Peruvianum, was originally given to the sunflower and other plants of which the flowers turn so as to follow the sun.]

[2] [See the report of M. Thiers' Budget speech in the *Times* of June 22, 1871. The speech had "an inspiriting effect" upon his hearers (*ibid.*, June 23).]

It is a low estimate to say the payment of duties will take off one per cent. of their five.

Practically, therefore, the arrangement is that they get four per cent. for their money, and have all the trouble of customs duties, to take from them another extra one per cent., and give it them back again Four per cent., however, is not to be despised. But who pays *that?*

4. The people who have got no money to lend, pay it; the daily worker and producer pays it. Unfortunate "William,"[1] who has borrowed, in this instance, not a plane he could make planks with, but mitrailleuses and

and restrict the national industry. Leading commodities of necessary use —such as sugar and coffee, all raw materials for manufacture, and all textile substances—have to pay *ad valorem* duties, in some cases ruinously heavy. Worse still, and bearing most seriously on English interests, heavy export duties are to be imposed on French products, among which wine, brandy, liqueurs, fruits, eggs, and oilcake stand conspicuous—these articles paying a fixed duty; while all others, grain and flour, we presume, included, will pay 1 per cent. *ad valorem.* Navigation dues are also to be levied on shipping, French and foreign; and the internal postage of letters is to be increased 25 per cent. From the changes in the Customs duties alone an increased revenue of £10,500,000 is anticipated. We will not venture to assert that these changes may not yield the amount of money so urgently needed; but if they do, the result will open up a new chapter in political economy. Judging from the experience of every civilised State, it is simply inconceivable that such a tariff can be productive, can possess the faculty of healthy natural increase, or can act otherwise than as a dead weight on the industrial energies of the country. Every native of France will have to pay more for articles of prime necessity, and will thus have less to spare on articles of luxury — that is, on those which contribute most to the revenue, with the least of damage to the resources of his industry. Again, the manufacturer will have the raw material of his trade enhanced in value; and, though he may have the benefit of a drawback on his exports, he will find his home market starved by State policy. His foreign customer will purchase less, because the cost is so much greater, and because his means are lessened by the increase in the prices of food through the export duty on French products. The French peasant finds *his* market contracted by an export duty which prevents the English consumers of his eggs, poultry, and wine from buying as largely as they once did; his profits are therefore reduced, his piece of ground is less valuable, his ability to pay taxes is lessened. The policy, in short, might almost be thought expressly devised to impoverish the entire nation when it most wants enriching—to strangle French industry by slow degrees, to dry up at their source the main currents of revenue. Our only hope is, that the proposals, by their very grossness, will defeat themselves."—*Telegraph*, June 29th.

[1] [See Letter 1, §§ 13–14 (pp. 24–26).]

gunpowder, with which he has planed away his own farmsteads, and forests, and fair fields of corn, and having left himself desolate, now has to pay for the loan of this useful instrument, five per cent. So says the gently commercial James to him: "Not only the price of your plane, but five per cent. to me for lending it, O sweetest of Williams."

Sweet William, carrying generally more absinthe in his brains than wit, has little to say for himself, having, indeed, wasted too much of his sweetness lately, tainted disagreeably with petroleum, on the desert air of Paris. And the people who are to get their five per cent. out of him, and roll him and suck him,—the sugar-cane of a William that he is,—how should they but think the arrangement a glorious one for the nation?

So there is great acclaim and triumphal procession of financiers! and the arrangement is made; namely, that all the poor labouring persons in France are to pay the rich idle ones five per cent. annually, on the sum of eighty millions of sterling pounds, until further notice.

5. But this is not all, observe. Sweet William is not altogether so soft in his rind that you can crush him without some sufficient machinery: you must have your army in good order, "to justify public confidence"; and you must get the expense of that, beside your five per cent., out of ambrosial William. He must pay the cost of his own roller.

Now, therefore, see briefly what it all comes to.

First, you spend eighty millions of money in fireworks, doing no end of damage in letting them off.

Then you borrow money, to pay the firework-maker's bill, from any gain-loving persons who have got it.

And then, dressing your bailiff's men in new red coats and cocked hats, you send them drumming and trumpeting into the fields, to take the peasants by the throat, and make them pay the interest on what you have borrowed; and the expense of the cocked hats besides.[1]

[1] [For a later reference to this analysis of National Debts, see Letter 58, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 428).]

That is "financiering," my friends, as the mob of the money-makers understand it. And they understand it well. For that is what it always comes to, finally; taking the peasant by the throat. He *must* pay—for he only *can*. Food can only be got out of the ground, and all these devices of soldiership, and law, and arithmetic, are but ways of getting at last down to him, the furrow-driver, and snatching the roots from him as he digs.[1]

And they have got him down, now, they think, well, for a while, poor William, after his fit of fury and petroleum: and can make their money out of him for years to come, in the old ways.

6. Did you chance, my friends, any of you, to see, the other day, the 88rd number of the *Graphic*, with the picture of the Queen's concert in it? All the fine ladies sitting so trimly, and looking so sweet, and doing the whole duty of woman—wearing their fine clothes gracefully; and the pretty singer, white-throated, warbling "Home, sweet home" to them, so morally, and melodiously! Here was yet to be our ideal of virtuous life, thought the *Graphic*![2] Surely, we are safe back with our virtues in satin slippers and lace veils;—and our Kingdom of Heaven is come again, *with* observation,[3] and crown diamonds of the dazzlingest. Cherubim and Seraphim in toilettes de Paris —(bleu-de-ciel—vert d'olivier-de—Noé—mauve de colombe-fusillée) dancing to Coote and Tinney's band; and vulgar Hell reserved for the canaille, as heretofore! Vulgar Hell shall be didactically pourtrayed, accordingly (see page 17),

[1] [Compare below, p. 184.]

[2] [A double-page illustration of "Her Majesty's State Concert at Buckingham Palace," with Adelina Patti (?) singing "Home, Sweet Home," in the number for July 1, 1871. (The picture seems, however, to have been imaginary, for the Court Circular—*Times*, June 21—shows that Patti was not among the performers; that "Home, Sweet Home" was not in the programme; and that the Queen was not present.) In a note on the concert (p. 14) the *Graphic* enlarged on the pure taste which is illustrated by State concerts. On p. 17 it published an illustration of a "Convoy of Communist Prisoners at Versailles." On p. 3 of the same issue was an article on "July Fashions," mentioning "a few of the toilettes worn at a grand ball last week."]

[3] [Luke xvii. 20 ("The kingdom of God cometh not with observation"); compare Vol. XVIII. p. 428.]

—Wickedness going its way to *its* poor Home—bitter-sweet. Ouvrier and pétroleuse—prisoners at last—glaring wild on their way to die.

Alas! of these divided races, of whom one was appointed to teach and guide the other, which has indeed sinned deepest—the unteaching, or the untaught?—which now are guiltiest—these, who perish, or those—who forget?

Ouvrier and pétroleuse; they are gone their way—to their death. But for these, the Virgin of France shall yet unfold the oriflamme above their graves, and lay her blanch lilies on their dust.[1] Yes, and for these, great Charles shall rouse his Roland, and bid him put ghostly trump to lip, and breathe a point of war;[2] and the helmed Pucelle shall answer with a wood-note of Domrémy;—yes, and for these the Louis they mocked,[3] like his master, shall raise his holy hands, and pray God's peace.

"Not as the world giveth."[4] Everlasting shame only, and unrest, are the world's gifts. These Swine of the five per cent. shall share them duly.

> "La sconoscente vita, che i fe' sozzi
> Ad ogni conoscenza or li fa bruni.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Che tutto l'oro, ch'e sotto la luna,
> E che già fù, di queste anime stanche
> Non poterebbe farne posar una."[5]

---

[1] [Hitherto "lay her blanched lilies on their smirched dust"; corrected by Ruskin in his copy as above.]

[2] [Ruskin here reverses the legend which tells of the blast of Roland's horn arousing Charlemagne: as in *Marmion*, vi. 33, and as referred to by Ruskin in his note on line 626 in *Rock Honeycomb*. For "a point of war," see *2 Henry IV.*, Act iv. sc. 1. For the home of La Pucelle, the Maid of Orleans, in the forests of Domrémy, see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 82 (Vol. XVIII. p. 133).]

[3] [This seems to refer to the imminent risk of destruction to which the Sainte Chapelle was exposed during the Communist conflagrations. Compare Letter 40, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 69): "the modern Cité rises round the Sainte Chapelle. . . . But St. Louis perhaps is not wholly dead yet."]

[4] [John xiv. 27. The title of this letter.]

[5] [Dante's *Inferno*, vii. 53–54, 64–66:—

> "That ignoble life,
> Which made them vile before, now makes them dark,
> And to all knowledge indiscernible.
> Not all the gold that is beneath the moon,
> Or ever hath been, of these toil-worn souls
> Might purchase rest for one." (Cary.)

Ruskin quotes the passage also in *Munera Pulveris*, § 88 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 210 *n.*).]

7. "Ad ogni conoscenza bruni": Dark to all recognition! So they would have it indeed; true of instinct. "Ce serait l'inquisition," screamed the Senate of France, threatened with income-tax, and inquiry into their ways and means.[1] Well,—what better thing could it be? Had they not been blind long enough, under their mole-hillocks, that they should shriek at the first spark of "Inquisition"? A few things might be "inquired," one should think, and answered, among honest men, now, to advantage, and openly? "Ah no—for God's sake," shrieks the Senate, "no Inquisition. If ever anybody should come to know how we live, we were disgraced for ever, honest gentlemen that we are."

Now, my friends, the first condition of all bravery is to keep out of *this* loathsomeness. If you *do* live by rapine, stand up like a man for the old law of bow and spear; but don't fall whimpering down on your belly, like Autolycus, "grovelling on the ground,"[2] when another human creature asks you how you get your daily bread, with an "Oh, that ever I was born,—here is inquisition come on me!"

The Inquisition must come. Into men's consciences, no; not now: there is little worth looking into there. But into their pockets—yes; a most practicable and beneficial inquisition, to be made thoroughly and purgatorially, once for all, and rendered unnecessary hereafter, by furnishing the relieved marsupialia[3] with—*glass* pockets, for the future.

8. You know, at least, that we, in our own society, are to have glass pockets, as we are all to give the tenth of what we have, to buy land with, so that we must every one know each other's property to a farthing. And this month I begin making up my own accounts for you, as I said I would: I could not, sooner, though I set matters

[1] [See above, p. 128.]

[2] [*The Winter's Tale*, Act iv. sc. 2: compare Vol. XXVIII. p. 426.]

[3] [For later references to this passage, in which Ruskin proposes to substitute glass-pockets for pouches, see Letters 62, § 17 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 528), and 77, § 6 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 113). Compare also *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 147 (Vol. XVIII. p. 505).]

in train as soon as my first letter was out, and effected (as I supposed!), in February, a sale of £14,000 worth of houses, at the West End, to Messrs. —— and ——, of —— Row.

But from then till now, I've been trying to get that piece of business settled, and until yesterday, 19th July, I have not been able.

For, first there was a mistake made by my lawyer in the list of the houses: No. 7 ought to have been No. 1. It was a sheer piece of stupidity, and ought to have been corrected by a dash of the pen; but all sorts of deeds had to be made out again, merely that they might be paid for; and it took about three months to change 7 into 1.

At last all was declared smooth again, and I thought I should get my money; but Messrs. —— never stirred. My people kept sending them letters, saying I really did want the money, though they mightn't think it. Whether they thought it or not, they took no notice of any such informal communications. I thought they were going to back out of their bargain; but my man of business at last got their guarantee for its completion.

"If they've guaranteed the payment, why don't they pay?" thought I; but still I couldn't get any money. At last I found the lawyers on both sides were quarrelling over the stamp-duties! Nobody knew, of the whole pack of them, whether this stamp or that was the right one! and my lawyers wouldn't give an eighty-pound stamp, and theirs wouldn't be content with a twenty-pound one.

Now, you know, all this stamp business itself is merely Mr. Gladstone's * way of coming in for *his* share of the booty. I can't be allowed to sell my houses in peace, but Mr. Gladstone must have his three hundred pounds out of me, to feed his Woolwich infant[1] with, and fire it

* Of course the Prime Minister is always the *real* tax-gatherer; the Chancellor of the Exchequer is only the cat's-paw.

[1] [See Letter 2, § 20 *n.* (p. 43).]

off "with the most satisfactory result," "nothing damaged but the platform."

I am content, if only he would come and say what he wants, and take it, and get out of my sight. But not to know what he *does* want! and to keep me from getting my money at all, while his lawyers are asking which is the right stamp? I think he had better be clear on that point next time.

But here, at last, are six months come and gone, and the stamp question is—not settled, indeed, but I've undertaken to keep my man of business free of harm, if the stamps won't do; and so at last he says I'm to have my money; and I really believe, by the time this letter is out, Messrs. —— will have paid me my £14,000.

9. Now you know I promised you the tenth of all I had, when free from incumbrances already existing on it. This first instalment of £14,000 is not all clear, for I want part of it to found a Mastership of Drawing under the Art Professorship at Oxford;[1] which I can't do rightly for less than £5000. But I'll count the sum left as £10,000 instead of £9000, and that will be clear for our society, and so, you shall have a thousand pounds down, as the tenth of that, which will quit me, observe, of my pledge thus far.

A thousand *down*, I say; but down where? Where can I put it to be safe for us? You will find presently, as others come in to help us, and we get something worth taking care of, that it becomes a very curious question indeed, where we can put our money to be safe!

In the meantime, I've told my man of business to buy £1000 consols in the names of two men of honour; the names cannot yet be certain.[2] What remains of the round thousand shall be kept to add to next instalment. And

[1] [See Vol. XXI. p. xxi.]

[2] [Ultimately Mr. Cowper-Temple (see above, p. 42) and Sir Thomas Acland (brother of Ruskin's great friend, Henry): see below, p. 159. "I have telegraphed and written, both, to your brother," wrote Ruskin to Henry Acland (August 4), "to ask his pardon for using his name to-day with Mr. Cowper-Temple's. I wanted

thus begins the fund, which I think we may advisably call the "St. George's" fund. And although the interest on consols is, as I told you before,[1] only the taxation on the British peasant continued since the Napoleon wars, still *this* little portion of his labour, the interest on our St. George's fund, will at last be saved for him, and brought back to him.

10. And now, if you will read over once again the end of my fifth letter [p. 95], I will tell you a little more of what we are to do with this money, as it increases.

First, let whoever gives us any, be clear in their minds that it is a Gift. It is not an Investment. It is a frank and simple gift to the British people: nothing of it is to come back to the giver.

But also, nothing of it is to be lost. The money is not to be spent in feeding Woolwich infants with gunpowder. It is to be spent in dressing the earth and keeping it,[2]—in feeding human lips,—in clothing human bodies,—in kindling human souls.

First of all, I say, in dressing the earth. As soon as the fund reaches any sufficient amount, the Trustees shall buy with it any kind of land offered them at just price in Britain. Rock, moor, marsh, or sea-shore—it matters not what, so it be British ground, and secured to us.

Then, we will ascertain the absolute best that can be made of every acre. We will first examine what flowers and herbs it naturally bears; every wholesome flower that it will grow shall be sown in its wild places, and every kind of fruit-tree that can prosper; and arable and pasture land extended by every expedient of tillage, with humble

to buy instantly, for fear the statement in *Fors* should be suspected. I have bought 2000 consols (as another tithe of 1000 will be due this month) in Sir Thos. Acland's and Mr. Cowper's name as Trustees. I write this in case he should be with you instead of at Kilverton. The Trusteeship of course involves no approval of details of plan."]

[1] [See Letter 4, § 8 (p. 69).]

[2] [Genesis ii. 15. See the opening words of *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 13).]

and simple cottage dwellings under faultless sanitary regulation. Whatever piece of land we begin to work upon, we shall treat thoroughly at once, putting unlimited manual labour on it, until we have every foot of it under as strict care as a flower-garden: and the labourers shall be paid sufficient, unchanging wages; and their children educated compulsorily in agricultural schools inland, and naval schools by the sea, the indispensable first condition of such education being that the boys learn either to ride or to sail;[1] the girls to spin, weave, and sew, and at a proper age to cook all ordinary food exquisitely;[2] the youth of both sexes to be disciplined daily in the strictest practice of vocal music;[3] and for morality, to be taught gentleness to all brute creatures,—finished courtesy to each other,—to speak truth with rigid care, and to obey orders with the precision of slaves. Then, as they get older, they are to learn the natural history of the place they live in,—to know Latin, boys and girls both,—and the history of five cities: Athens, Rome, Venice, Florence, and London.[4]

11. Now, as I told you in my fifth letter, to what extent I may be able to carry this plan into execution, I know not; but to *some* visible extent, with my own single hand, I can and will, if I live. Nor do I doubt but that I shall find help enough, as soon as the full action of the system is seen, and ever so little a space of rightly cultivated ground in perfect beauty, with inhabitants in peace of heart, of whom none

"Doluit miserans inopem, aut invidit habenti."[5]

Such a life we have lately been taught by vile persons to think impossible; so far from being impossible, it *has*

[1] [Compare Letter 9, § 11 (p. 156) and Letter 85, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 322).]
[2] [Compare "The Story of Arachne," § 25 (Vol. XX. p. 377).]
[3] [Compare Letter 57, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 406).]
[4] ["*Cf.* opinions of five men [Plato, Virgil, Dante, Victor Carpaccio, and Shakespeare], Letter 18, § 13" (p. 314).—*MS. note in Author's copy.* For the five cities, see (in a later volume of this edition) Ruskin's Preface (§ 3) to *The Economist of Xenophon.*]
[5] [Virgil, *Georgics*, ii. 499.]

been the actual life of all glorious human states in their origin.

> "Hanc olim veteres vitam coluere Sabini;
> Hanc Remus et frater; sic fortis Etruria crevit;
> Scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma."[1]

But, had it never been endeavoured until now, we might yet learn to hope for its unimagined good by considering what it has been possible for us to reach of unimagined evil. Utopia and its benediction are probable and simple things, compared to the Kakotopia and its curse, which we had seen actually fulfilled. We have seen the city of Paris (what miracle can be thought of beyond this?) with her own forts raining ruin on her palaces, and her young children casting fire into the streets in which they had been born, but we have not faith enough in heaven to imagine the reverse of this, or the building of any city whose streets shall be full of innocent boys and girls playing in the midst thereof.[2]

12. My friends, you have trusted, in your time, too many idle words. Read now these following, not idle ones; and remember *them;* and trust them, for they are true:—

"Oh, thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

"And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

"In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. . . .

"Whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. . . .

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment

[1] [Virgil, *Georgics*, ii. 532–534.]
[2] [Zechariah viii. 5.]

thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."[1]

Remember only that in this now antiquated translation, "righteousness" means, accurately and simply, "justice,"[2] and is the eternal law of right, obeyed alike in the great times of each state, by Jew, Greek, and Roman. In my next letter, we will examine into the nature of this justice, and of its relation to Governments that deserve the name.

And so believe me,

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] [Isaiah liv. 11, 13–15, 17.]
[2] [See above, pp. 108–109.]

# LETTER 9

## HONOUR TO WHOM HONOUR[1]

DENMARK HILL,
*1st September*, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—As the design which I had in view when I began these letters (and many a year before, in the germ and first outlines of it[2]) is now fairly afoot, and in slow, but determined, beginning of realization, I will endeavour in this and the next following letter to set its main features completely before you; though, remember, the design would certainly be a shallow and vain one, if its bearings could be either shortly explained, or quickly understood. I have much in my own hope, which I know you are as yet incapable of hoping, but which your enemies are dexterous in discouraging, and eager to discourage. Have you noticed how curiously and earnestly the greater number of public journals that have yet quoted these papers, allege, for their part, nothing but the difficulties in our way; and that with as much contempt as they can venture to express? No editor could say to your face that the endeavour to give you fresh air, wholesome employment, and high education, was reprehensible or dangerous. The worst he can venture to say is, that it is ridiculous,—which you observe is, by most, declared as wittily as they may.

2. Some must, indeed, candidly think, as well as say so. Education of any noble kind has of late been so constantly given only to the idle classes, or, at least, to those who

[1] [For the title, see § 11.]
[2] [See Introduction, above, p. xviii.]

conceive it a privilege to be idle,* that it is difficult for any person, trained in modern habits of thought, to imagine a true and refined scholarship, of which the essential foundation is to be skill in some useful labour. Time and trial will show which of the two conceptions of education is indeed the ridiculous one—and *have* shown, many and many a day before this, if any one would look at the showing. Such trial, however, I mean anew to make, with what life is left to me, and help given to me: and the manner of it is to be this, that, few or many, as our company may be, we will secure for the people of Britain as wide spaces of British ground as we can; and on such spaces of freehold land we will cause to be trained as many British children as we can, in healthy, brave, and kindly life, to every one of whom there shall be done true justice, and dealt fair opportunity of "advancement," or what else may, indeed, be good for them.

8. "True justice!" I might more shortly have written "justice," only you are all now so much in the way of asking for what you think "rights," which, if you could get them, would turn out to be the deadliest wrongs;—and you suffer so much from an external mechanism of justice, which for centuries back has abetted, or, at best, resulted in, every conceivable manner of injustice—that I am compelled to say "*True* justice," to distinguish it from that which is commonly imagined by the populace, or attainable under the existing laws, of civilized nations.

This true justice (not to spend time, which I am apt to be too fond of doing, in verbal definition) consists mainly

* Infinite nonsense is talked about the "work done" by the upper classes. I have done a little myself, in my day, of the kind of work they boast of; but mine, at least, has been all play.[1] Even lawyer's, which is, on the whole, the hardest, you may observe to be essentially grim play, made more jovial for themselves by conditions which make it somewhat dismal to other people. Here and there we have a real worker among soldiers, or no soldiering would long be possible; nevertheless young men don't go into the Guards with any primal or essential idea of work.

[1] [Compare below, p. 513.]

in the granting to every human being due aid in the development of such faculties as it possesses for action and enjoyment; primarily, for useful action, because all enjoyment worth having (nay, all enjoyment not harmful) must in some way arise out of that, either in happy energy, or rightly complacent and exulting rest.

4. "Due" aid, you see, I have written. Not "equal" aid. One of the first statements I made to you respecting this domain of ours was "there shall be no equality in it."[1] In education especially, true justice is curiously unequal—if you choose to give it a hard name, iniquitous. The right law of it is that you are to take most pains with the best material. Many conscientious masters will plead for the exactly contrary iniquity, and say you should take the most pains with the dullest boys. But that is not so (only you must be very careful that you know which *are* the dull boys; for the cleverest look often very like them). Never waste pains on bad ground; let it remain rough, though properly looked after and cared for; it will be of best service so; but spare no labour on the good, or on what has in it the capacity of good. The tendency of modern help and care is quite morbidly and madly in reverse of this great principle.[2] Benevolent persons are always, by preference, busy on the essentially bad; and exhaust themselves in efforts to get maximum intellect from cretins, and maximum virtue from criminals. Meantime, they take no care to ascertain (and for the most part when ascertained, obstinately refuse to remove) the continuous sources of cretinism and crime, and suffer the most splendid material in child-nature to wander neglected about the streets, until it has become rotten to the degree in which they feel prompted to take an interest in it. Now I have not the slightest intention—understand this, I beg of you, very clearly—of setting myself to mend or reform people; when they are once out of form they may

[1] [See Letter 5, § 21 (p. 96).]

[2] [Compare *A Joy for Ever*, § 184 (Vol. XVI. p. 168); Vol. XVII. p. 542; and Letter 81, § 17 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 214).]

stay so, for me.* But of what unspoiled stuff I can find to my hand I will cut the best shapes there is room for: shapes unalterable, if it may be, for ever.

"The best shapes there is room for," since, according to the conditions around them, men's natures must expand or remain contracted; and, yet more distinctly, let me say, "the best shapes that there is *substance* for," seeing that we must accept contentedly infinite difference in the original nature and capacity, even at their purest; which it is the first condition of right education to make manifest to all persons —most of all to the persons chiefly concerned. That other men should know their measure, is, indeed, desirable; but that they should know it themselves, is wholly necessary.

5. "By competitive examination of course?" Sternly, no! but under absolute prohibition of all violent and strained effort—most of all envious or anxious effort—in every exercise of body and mind; and by enforcing on every scholar's heart, from the first to the last stage of his instruction, the irrevocable ordinance of the third Fors Clavigera, that his mental rank among men is fixed from the hour he was born,—that by no temporary or violent effort can he train, though he may seriously injure the faculties he has; that by no manner of effort can he increase them; and that his best happiness is to consist in the admiration of powers by him for ever unattainable, and of arts, and deeds, by him for ever inimitable.[1]

* I speak in the first person, not insolently, but necessarily, being yet alone in this design: and for some time to come the responsibility of carrying it on must rest with me, nor do I ask or desire any present help, except from those who understand what I have written in the course of the last ten years, and who can trust me, therefore. But the continuance of the scheme must depend on the finding men staunch and prudent for the heads of each department of the practical work, consenting, indeed, with each other as to certain great principles of that work, but left wholly to their own judgment as to the manner and degree in which they are to be carried into effect.

[1] [In his Index to vols. i. and ii. Ruskin under "Competitive Examinations" refers to this place as giving "the proper substitute for them," and adds, "read this last passage carefully." Compare Vol. I. p. 384 and *n.*; and below, p. 248 *n.*]

6. Some ten or twelve years ago, when I was first actively engaged in Art teaching, a young Scottish student[1] came up to London to put himself under me, having taken many prizes (justly, with respect to the qualities looked for by the judges) in various schools of Art. He worked under me very earnestly and patiently for some time; and I was able to praise his doings in what I thought very high terms: nevertheless, there remained always a look of mortification on his face, after he had been praised, however unqualifiedly. At last, he could hold no longer, but one day, when I had been more than usually complimentary, turned to me with an anxious, yet not unconfident expression, and asked: "Do you think, sir, that I shall ever draw as well as Turner?"

I paused for a second or two, being much taken aback; and then answered,* "It is far more likely you should be made Emperor of All the Russias.[2] There is a new Emperor every fifteen or twenty years, on the average; and by strange hap, and fortunate cabal, anybody might be made Emperor. But there is only one Turner in five hundred years, and God decides, without any admission of auxiliary cabal, what piece of clay His soul is to be put in."

7. It was the first time that I had been brought into direct collision with the modern system of prize-giving and competition; and the mischief of it was, in the sequel clearly shown to me, and tragically. This youth had the finest powers of mechanical execution I have ever met with, but was quite incapable of invention, or strong intellectual effort of any kind. Had he been taught early and thoroughly to know his place, and be content with his faculty, he would have been one of the happiest and most

* I do not mean that I answered in these words, but to the effect of them, at greater length.

[1] [J. J. Laing (see Vol. V. p. 12). Several letters to him from Ruskin are given in a later volume of this edition.]

[2] [Compare Letter 95, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 495).]

serviceable of men. But, at the Art schools, he got prize after prize for his neat handling; and having, in his restricted imagination, no power of discerning the qualities of great work, all the vanity of his nature was brought out unchecked; so that, being intensely industrious and conscientious, as well as vain (it is a Scottish combination of character not unfrequent*), he naturally expected to become one of the greatest of men. My answer not only mortified, but angered him, and made him suspicious of me; he thought I wanted to keep his talents from being fairly displayed, and soon afterwards asked leave (he was then in my employment as well as under my teaching) to put himself under another master. I gave him leave at once, telling him, "if he found the other master no better to his mind, he might come back to me whenever he chose." The other master giving him no more hope of advancement than I did, he came back to me; I sent him into Switzerland, to draw Swiss architecture; but instead of doing what I bid him, quietly, and nothing else, he set himself, with furious industry, to draw snowy mountains and clouds, that he might show me he *could* draw like Albert Dürer, or Turner;—spent his strength in agony of vain effort;—caught cold, fell into decline, and died. How many actual deaths are now annually caused by the strain and anxiety of competitive examination, it would startle us all if we could know: but the mischief done to the best faculties of the brain in all cases, and the miserable confusion and absurdity involved in the system itself, which offers every place, not to the man who is indeed fitted for it, but to the one who, on a given day, chances to have bodily strength enough to stand the cruellest strain, are evils infinite in their consequences, and more lamentable than many deaths.

* We English are usually bad altogether in a harmonious way, and only quite insolent when we are quite good-for-nothing; the least good in us shows itself in a measure of modesty; but many Scotch natures, of fine capacity otherwise, are rendered entirely abortive by conceit.

8. This, then, shall be the first condition of what education it may become possible for us to give, that the strength of the youths shall never be strained; and that their best powers shall be developed in each, without competition, though they shall have to pass crucial, but not severe, examinations, attesting clearly to themselves and to other people, not the utmost they can do, but that at least they can do *some* things accurately and well: their own certainty of this being accompanied with the quite as clear and much happier certainty, that there are many other things which they will never be able to do at all.

"The happier certainty?" Yes. A man's happiness consists infinitely more in admiration of the faculties of others than in confidence in his own. That reverent admiration is the perfect human gift in him; all lower animals are happy and noble in the degree they can share it. A dog reverences you, a fly does not; the capacity of partly understanding a creature above him, is the dog's nobility. Increase such reverence in human beings, and you increase daily their happiness, peace, and dignity; take it away, and you make them wretched as well as vile. But for fifty years back modern education has devoted itself simply to the teaching of impudence; and then we complain that we can no more manage our mobs! "Look at Mr. Robert Stephenson" (we tell a boy), "and at Mr. James Watt, and Mr. William Shakespeare! You know you are every bit as good as they; you have only to work in the same way, and you will infallibly arrive at the same eminence." Most boys believe the "you are every bit as good as they," without any painful experiment; but the better-minded ones really take the advised measures; and as, at the end of all things, there *can* be but one Mr. James Watt or Mr. William Shakespeare, the rest of the candidates for distinction, finding themselves, after all their work, still indistinct, think it must be the fault of the police, and are riotous accordingly.

9. To some extent it *is* the fault of the police, truly

enough, considering as the police of Europe, or teachers of politeness and civic manners, its higher classes,—higher either by race or faculty. Police they are, or else are nothing: bound to keep order, both by clear teaching of the duty and delight of Respect, and, much more, by being themselves—Respectable; whether as priests, or kings, or lords, or generals, or admirals;—if they will only take care to be verily *that*, the Respect will be forthcoming, with little pains: nay, even Obedience, inconceivable to modern free souls as it may be, we shall get again, as soon as there is anybody worth obeying, and who can keep us out of shoal water.

10. Not but that those two admirals and their captains have been sorely, though needfully, dealt with. It was, doubtless, not a scene of the brightest in our naval history —that *Agincourt*, entomologically, as it were, pinned to her wrong place, off Gibraltar; but in truth, it was less the captain's fault, than the ironmonger's. You need not think you can ever have seamen in iron ships; it is not in flesh and blood to be vigilant when vigilance is so slightly necessary: the best seaman born will lose his qualities, when he knows he can steam against wind and tide,* and has to handle ships so large that the care of them is necessarily divided among many persons. If you want sea-captains indeed, like Sir Richard Grenville or Lord Dundonald,[1] you must give them small ships, and wooden ones,—nothing

* "Steam has, of course, utterly extirpated seamanship," says Admiral Rous, in his letter to the *Times* (which I had, of course, not seen when I wrote this). Read the whole letter and the article on it in the *Times* of the 17th, which is entirely temperate and conclusive.[2]

[1] [For other references to Grenville, see Vol. XVIII. p. 538; and, below, p. 385; also Letters 42, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 95), and 88, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 387); and for Dundonald (Cochrane), Letter 66, § 20 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 630).]

[2] [The *Agincourt* (Captain Hamilton Beamish), 6621 tons, struck on the Pearl Rock, near Gibraltar, July 11, 1871; got off by great skill and management by the *Hercules* (Captain Lord Guildford). Particulars of the accident, etc., are given in the *Times* of July 17, 1871. By the Admiralty Minute (*Times*, August 19) Admirals Wellesley and Wilmot were ordered to strike flags, Captains Beamish and Wells superseded, others censured. There was a leading article on the Minute on August 19. Admiral Rous's letter, from which Ruskin quotes, was published on August 24, and a leading article was again devoted to the subject.]

but oak, pine, and hemp to trust to, above or below,—and those, trustworthy.

11. You little know how much is implied in the two conditions of boys' education that I gave you in my last letter,[1]—that they shall all learn either to ride or sail; nor by what constancy of law the power of highest discipline and honour is vested by Nature in the two chivalries—of the Horse and the Wave.[2] Both are significative of the right command of man over his own passions; but they teach, farther, the strange mystery of relation that exists between his soul and the wild natural elements on the one hand, and the wild lower animals on the other. The sea-riding gave their chief strength of temper to the Athenian, Norman, Pisan, and Venetian,—masters of the arts of the world: but the gentleness of chivalry, properly so called, depends on the recognition of the order and awe of lower and loftier animal-life, first clearly taught in the myth of Chiron,[3] and in his bringing up of Jason, Æsculapius, and Achilles, but most perfectly by Homer in the fable of the horses of Achilles, and the part assigned to them, in relation to the death of his friend, and in prophecy of his own.[4] There is, perhaps, in all the *Iliad* nothing more deep in significance—there is nothing in all literature more perfect[5] in human tenderness, and honour for the mystery of inferior life,* than the verses that describe the sorrow of the divine

* The myth of Balaam; the cause assigned for the journey of the first King of Israel from his father's house; and the manner of the triumphal entry of the greatest King of Judah into His capital, are symbolic of the same truths; but in a yet more strange humility.[6]

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[1] [Letter 8, § 10 (p. 143).]

[2] [Compare Letter 75, § 17 (Vol. XXIX. p. 73). On the chivalry of the Horse, see also Letter 22, § 18 (p. 383), and compare Vol. XX. p. 351. On that of the Wave, see Vol. XX. p. 394. For riding and rowing as parts of education, see *A Joy for Ever*, § 128 (Vol. XVI. p. 111).]

[3] [Compare below, p. 428, and Vol. XX. pp. 390 *seq.*]

[4] [*Iliad*, xix. 404–417. Compare Vol. VII. pp. 338–339 *n.*, and *Love's Meinie*, § 138 (Vol. XXV. p. 131).]

[5] [So Matthew Arnold says: "No passages (in literature) have moved me more than, in poetry, the lines describing the pity of Zeus for the horses of Achilles (*Iliad*, xvii. 441–447)."—*Fortnightly Review*, August 1887.]

[6] [The references here are to Numbers xxii.; 1 Samuel ix.; and John xii. 14.]

horses at the death of Patroclus, and the comfort given them by the greatest of the gods. You shall read Pope's translation; it does not give you the manner of the original, but it entirely gives you the passion:—

"Meantime, at distance from the scene of blood,
The pensive steeds of great Achilles stood;
Their godlike master slain before their eyes
They wept, and shared in human miseries.
In vain Automedon now shakes the rein,
Now plies the lash, and soothes and threats in vain;
Nor to the fight nor Hellespont they go,
Restive they stood, and obstinate in woe;
Still as a tombstone, never to be moved,
On some good man or woman unreproved
Lays its eternal weight; or fix'd as stands
A marble courser by the sculptor's hands,
Placed on the hero's grave. Along their face,
The big round drops coursed down with silent pace,
Conglobing on the dust. Their manes, that late
Circled their arched necks, and waved in state,
Trail'd on the dust, beneath the yoke were spread,
And prone to earth was hung their languid head:
Nor Jove disdain'd to cast a pitying look,
While thus relenting to the steeds he spoke:
'Unhappy coursers of immortal strain!
Exempt from age, and deathless now in vain!
Did we your race on mortal man bestow,
Only, alas! to share in mortal woe?
For ah! what is there, of inferior birth,
That breathes or creeps upon the dust of earth;
What wretched creature of what wretched kind,
Than man more weak, calamitous and blind?
A miserable race! But cease to mourn!
For not by you shall Priam's son be borne
High on the splendid car; one glorious prize
He rashly boasts; the rest our will denies.
Ourself will swiftness to your nerves impart,
Ourself with rising spirits swell your heart.
Automedon your rapid flight shall bear
Safe to the navy through the storm of war. . . .'
He said; and, breathing in th' immortal horse
Excessive spirit, urged them to the course;
From their high manes they shake the dust, and bear
The kindling chariot through the parted war."[1]

[1] [Pope's *Homer's Iliad*, xvii. 484–519, 524–527 (translating Homer, lines 424 *seq.*).]

Is not that a prettier notion of horses than you will get from your betting English chivalry on the Derby day?* We will have, please heaven, some riding, not as jockeys ride, and some sailing, not as pots and kettles sail, once more on English land and sea; and out of both, kindled yet again, the chivalry of heart of the Knight of Athens, and Eques of Rome, and Ritter of Germany, and Chevalier of France, and Cavalier of England—chivalry gentle always and lowly, among those who deserved their name of knight; showing mercy to whom mercy was due, and honour to whom honour.[1]

12. It exists yet, and out of La Mancha,[2] too (or none of *us* could exist), whatever you may think in these days of ungentleness and Dishonour. It exists secretly, to the full, among you yourselves, and the recovery of it again would be to you as the opening of a well in the desert. You remember what I told you were the three spiritual treasures of your life—Admiration, Hope, and Love.[3] Admiration is the Faculty of giving Honour. It is the best word we have for the various feelings of wonder, reverence, awe, and humility, which are needful for all lovely work, and which constitute the habitual temper of all noble and clear-sighted persons, as opposed to the "impudence" of base and blind ones. The Latins called this great virtue "pudor," of which our "impudence" is the negative; the Greeks had a better word, "*αἰδώς*;"[4] too wide in the bearings of it for me to explain to you to-day, even if it *could* be explained before you recovered the feeling;—which, after being taught for fifty years that impudence is the chief duty of man, and that living in coal-holes and ash-heaps in his proudest existence, and that

* Compare also Black Auster at the Battle of the Lake, in Macaulay's *Lays of Rome* ["Battle of the Lake Regillus," stanza xxx.].

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[1] [Romans xiii. 7.]
[2] [For Ruskin on *Don Quixote*, see Vol. III. p. 81 n., and General Index.]
[3] [See Letter 5, §§ 14, 18 (pp. 90, 94).]
[4] [Compare *Eagle's Nest*, § 71 (Vol. XXII. p. 173).]

the methods of generation of vermin are his loftiest subject of science,—it will not be easy for *you* to do; but your children may, and you will see that it is good for them. In the history of the five cities I named,[1] they shall learn, so far as they can understand, what has been beautifully and bravely done; and they shall know the lives of the heroes and heroines in truth and naturalness; and shall be taught to remember the greatest of them on the days of their birth and death; so that the year shall have its full calendar of reverent Memory. And on every day, part of their morning service shall be a song in honour of the hero whose birthday it is:[2] and part of their evening service, a song of triumph for the fair death of one whose death-day it is: and in their first learning of notes they shall be taught the great purpose of music, which is to say a thing that you mean deeply, in the strongest and clearest possible way; and they shall never be taught to sing what they don't mean. They shall be able to sing merrily when they are happy, and earnestly when they are sad; but they shall find no mirth in mockery, nor in obscenity; neither shall they waste and profane their hearts with artificial and lascivious sorrow.

Regulations which will bring about some curious changes in piano-playing, and several other things.

18. "Which *will* bring." They are bold words, considering how many schemes have failed disastrously (as your able editors gladly point out), which seemed much more plausible than this. But, as far as I know history, good designs have not failed except when they were too narrow in their final aim, and too obstinately and eagerly pushed in the beginning of them. Prosperous Fortune only grants an almost invisible slowness of success, and demands invincible patience in pursuing it. Many good men have failed in haste; more in egotism, and desire to keep everything in their own hands; and some by mistaking the signs of their times;

[1] [See Letter 8, § 10 (p. 143).]
[2] [Compare Letters 37, § 8, and 42, § 6 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 20, 95).]

but others, and those generally the boldest in imagination, have not failed; and their successors, true knights or monks, have bettered the fate and raised the thoughts of men for centuries; nay, for decades of centuries. And there is assuredly nothing in this purpose I lay before you, so far as it reaches hitherto, which will require either knightly courage or monkish enthusiasm to carry out. To divert a little of the large current of English charity and justice from watching disease to guarding health, and from the punishment of crime to the reward of virtue; to establish, here and there, exercise grounds instead of hospitals, and training schools instead of penitentiaries, is not, if you will slowly take it to heart, a frantic imagination. What farther hope I have of getting some honest men to serve, each in his safe and useful trade, faithfully, as a good soldier serves in his dangerous, and too often very wide of useful one, may seem, for the moment, vain enough; for indeed, in the last sermon I heard out of an English pulpit,[1] the clergyman said it was now acknowledged to be impossible for any honest man to live by trade in England. From which the conclusion he drew was, not that the manner of trade in England should be amended, but that his hearers should be thankful they were going to heaven. It never seemed to occur to him that perhaps it might be only through amendment of their ways in trade that some of them could ever get there.

14. Such madness, therefore, as may be implied in this ultimate hope of seeing some honest work and traffic done in faithful fellowship, I confess to you: but what, for my own part, I am about to endeavour, is certainly within my power, if my life and health last a few years more, and the compass of it is soon definable. First,—as I told you at the beginning of these Letters,[2]—I must do my own proper work as well as I can—nothing else must come in the way of that; and for some time to come, it will

[1] [At Matlock: see below, p. 378.]
[2] [See above, p. 13.]

be heavy, because, after carefully considering the operation of the Kensington system of Art-teaching throughout the country, and watching for two years its effect on various classes of students at Oxford, I became finally convinced that it fell short of its objects in more than one vital particular: and I have, therefore, obtained permission to found a separate Mastership of Drawing in connection with the Art Professorship at Oxford; and elementary schools will be opened in the University galleries, next October, in which the methods of teaching will be calculated to meet requirements which have not been contemplated in the Kensington system.[1] But how far what these, not new, but very ancient, disciplines teach, may be by modern students, either required or endured, remains to be seen. The organization of the system of teaching, and preparation of examples, in this school, is, however, at present my chief work,—no light one,—and everything else must be subordinate to it.

15. But in my first series of lectures at Oxford, I stated (and cannot too often or too firmly state) that no great arts were practicable by any people, unless they were living contented lives, in pure air, out of the way of unsightly objects, and emancipated from unnecessary mechanical occupation.[2] It is simply one part of the practical work I have to do in Art-teaching, to bring, somewhere, such conditions into existence, and to show the working of them.[3] I know also assuredly that the conditions necessary for the Arts of men, are the best for their souls and bodies; and knowing this, I do not doubt but that it may be with due pains, to some material extent, convincingly shown; and I am now ready to receive help, little or much, from any one who cares to forward the showing of it.

16. Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, and the Right Hon. William Cowper-Temple, have consented to be the Trustees

[1] [Compare Letter 57, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 408); and on these matters, see further Vol. XXI. pp. xxii. *seq.*]
[2] [See *Lectures on Art*, §§ 116 *seq.* (Vol. XX. pp. 107 *seq.*).]
[3] [Compare Letter 78 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 137–138).]

of the fund; it being distinctly understood that in that office they accept no responsibility for the conduct of the scheme, and refrain from expressing any opinion of its principles. They simply undertake the charge of the money and land given to the St. George's Fund; certify to the public that it is spent, or treated, for the purposes of that fund, in the manner stated in my accounts of it; and, in the event of my death, hold it for such fulfilment of its purposes as they may then find possible.

But it is evidently necessary for the right working of the scheme that the Trustees should not, except only in that office, be at present concerned with or involved in it; and that no ambiguous responsibility should fall on them. I know too much of the manner of law to hope that I can get the arrangement put into proper form before the end of the year; but, I hope, at latest, on the eve of Christmas Day (the day I named first[1]) to publish the December number of *Fors* with the legal terms all clear: until then, whatever sums or land I may receive will be simply paid to the Trustees, or secured in their name, for the St. George's Fund; what I may attempt afterwards will be, in any case, scarcely noticeable for some time; for I shall only work with the interest of the fund;* and as I have strength and leisure:—I have little enough of the one; and am like to have little of the other, for years to come, if these drawing-schools become useful, as I hope. But what I may do myself is of small consequence. Long before it can come to any convincing result, I believe some of the gentlemen of England will have taken up the

* Since last *Fors* was published I have sold some more property, which has brought me in another ten thousand to tithe; so that I have bought a second thousand Consols in the names of the Trustees—and have received a pretty little gift of seven acres of woodland, in Worcestershire,[2] for you, already—so you see there is at least a beginning.

[1] [See above, p. 95; and for the reference in the December *Fors*, below, p. 190. The legal position of the Company was, however, not established till much later: see Vol. XXX.]

[2] [At Bewdley. There seems, however, to have been some delay on Ruskin's part in formally accepting the gift, which was ultimately increased to twenty acres: see Vol. XXVIII. pp. 424, 607.]

matter, and seen that, for their own sake, no less than the country's, they *must* now live on their estates, not in shooting-time only, but all the year; and be themselves farmers, or "shepherd lords,"[1] and make the field gain on the street, not the street on the field; and bid the light break into the smoke-clouds, and bear in their hands, up to those loathsome city walls, the gifts of Giotto's Charity, corn and flowers.[2]

17. It is time, too, I think. Did you notice the lovely instances of chivalry, modesty, and musical taste recorded in those letters in the *Times*,[3] giving description of the "civilizing" influence of our progressive age on the rural district of Margate?

They are of some documentary value, and worth preserving, for several reasons. Here they are:—

## I.—A TRIP TO MARGATE

*To the Editor of the "Times"*

SIR,—On Monday last I had the misfortune of taking a trip per steamer to Margate. The sea was rough, the ship crowded, and therefore most of the Cockney excursionists prostrate with sea-sickness. On landing on Margate pier I must confess I thought that, instead of landing in an English seaport, I had been transported by magic to a land inhabited by savages and lunatics. The scene that ensued when the unhappy passengers had to pass between the double line of a Margate mob on the pier must be seen to be believed possible in a civilized country. Shouts, yells, howls of delight greeted every pale-looking passenger, as he or she got on the pier, accompanied by a running comment of the lowest, foulest language imaginable. But the most insulted victims were a young lady, who having had a fit of hysterics on board, had to be assisted up the steps, and a venerable-looking old gentleman with a long grey beard, who, by-the-by, was not sick at all, but being crippled and very old, feebly tottered up the slippery steps leaning on two sticks. "Here's a guy!" "Hallo! you old thief, you won't get drowned, because you know that you are to be hung," etc., and worse than that, were the greetings of that poor old man. All this while a very much silver-bestriped policeman stood calmly by, without interfering by word or deed; and myself, having several ladies to take care of, could do nothing except telling the ruffianly mob some hard

[1] [See below, p. 210.]
[2] [See above, Letter 7, § 17 (p. 130).]
[3] [*Times*, August 18 and 19, 1871.]

who of all others knew best; the once in five hundred years given painter,[1] whose chief work, as separate from others, was the painting of skies. He knew the colours of the clouds over the sea, from the Bay of Naples to the Hebrides; and being once asked where, in Europe, were to be seen the loveliest skies, answered instantly, "In the Isle of Thanet." Where, therefore, and in this very town of Margate, he lived, when he chose to be quit of London, and yet not to travel.

And I can myself give this much confirmatory evidence of his saying;—that though I never stay in Thanet, the two loveliest skies I have myself ever seen (and next to Turner, I suppose few men of fifty have kept record of so many), were, one at Boulogne, and the other at Abbeville;[2] that is to say, in precisely the correspondent French districts of corn-bearing chalk, on the other side of the Channel.

"And what are pretty skies to us?" perhaps you will ask me: "or what have they to do with the behaviour of that crowd on Margate Pier?"

Well, my friends, the final result of the education I want you to give your children will be, in a few words, this. They will know what it is to see the sky.[3] They will know what it is to breathe it. And they will know, best of all, what it is to behave under it, as in the presence of a Father who is in heaven.

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

"terminal point," eastward, and places it very near to the southernmost point. Or, possibly, Ruskin may refer to the *Geography* of Ptolemy (about 150 A.D.), in whose map of Britain the North Foreland is shown. Ruskin presented to the St. George's Museum a copy of Ptolemy's work in the Latin edition of 1513.]

[1] [See above, § 6.]

[2] [At Boulogne in August 4, 1861, and at Abbeville in September 1868. They are both described in Ruskin's letters, see Vol. XIX. p. xlii. and *n.*]

[3] [Compare, below, p. 219; and Letters 75, § 4, and 88, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 58, 383).]

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Drawn thus by Giotto in the Chapel of the Arena at Padua

# LETTER 10

## THE BARON'S GATE[1]

DENMARK HILL,
*7th September*, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—For the last two or three days, the papers have been full of articles on a speech of Lord Derby's, which, it seems, has set the public mind on considering the land question.[2] My own mind having long ago been both set, and entirely made up, on that question, I have read neither the speech nor the articles on it; but my eye being caught this morning, fortunately, by the words "Doomsday Book" in my *Daily Telegraph*, and presently looking up the column, by "stalwart arms and heroic souls of free resolute Englishmen," I glanced down

[1] ["Castle Gates," "Warwick Castle," and "My First Travelling," were discarded titles for this letter. For the actual title, see § 18.]

[2] [This reference to Lord Derby's speech on the Land Question displaced the following passage on the Abolition of Purchase in the Army in the first draft of the letter:—

"MY FRIENDS,—I know well how provoked you must be with me by this time (the few of you who pay any attention to me at all), because I *will* not tell you plainly all I am going to try to do.

"I cannot help it; what can be actually done I am ready to tell you, but you cannot at present see, nor are you likely to believe what the doing it will tend to. It will indeed tend to the alteration of some bad laws, but chiefly to the slow establishment of good ones; and you cannot set hand to the work at all, unless you are sure of yourselves in that final requirement of my second letter: 'Be sure you can obey good laws before you seek to alter bad ones.'

"You will turn restive, I suppose, at that word 'obey,' and think I want you to obey me. Put that at once out of your heads. I would not be troubled with any ordering of you, though you give me the Queen's income to do it—twenty times over. The Queen herself never tries to do it. Nay, you set her Prime Minister at her to get her warrant to nullify the House of Lords, who were trying to do it, for once,—only unluckily thinking only of themselves; therefore ordering, the wrongest and basest thing but one they could have hazarded their Lordships on. Except it had been the buying of Livings, they could not have made a stand for a worse iniquity than the buying of commissions. For the Army is the purest and brightest body of Englishmen we have left; and corruption in that was not by any means a Holy Hedge or Haye Sainte, for their

the space between, and found this, to me, remarkable passage:[1]—

> "The upshot is, that, looking at the question from a purely mechanical point of view, we should seek the *beau idéal* in a landowner cultivating huge farms for himself, with abundant machinery and a few well-paid labourers to manage the mechanism, or delegating the task to the smallest possible number of tenants with capital. But when we bear in mind the origin of landlordism, of our national needs, and the real interests of the great body of English tenantry, we see how advisable it is to retain intelligent yeomen as part of our means of cultivating the soil."

This is all, then, is it, that your Liberal paper[2] ventures to say for you? It is *advisable* to retain a *few* intelligent yeomen in the island. I don't mean to find fault with the *Daily Telegraph:* I think it always means well on the whole, and deals fairly; which is more than can be said for its highly toned and delicately perfumed opponent, the *Pall Mall Gazette.*[3] But I think a "Liberal" paper might have said more for the "stalwart arms and heroic souls" than this. I am going myself to say a great deal more for them, though I am not a Liberal—quite the polar contrary of that.[4]

2. You, perhaps, have been provoked, in the course of these letters, by not being able to make out *what* I was.

> unlucky Lordships to abide by. They will have to stand by Holy Hedges of a more literal kind soon, if they would keep their coronets—and Heaven grant they may!—not for their sake but yours.
>
> "You are provoked with me also, doubtless, because you not only cannot make out what I want, but what I am. I am, and my father was before me . . ."

The reference is to the Army Regulation Bill (1871) which included among its provisions the abolition of the system of purchasing commissions. When the Bill reached the Lords the purchase clause was, on the motion of the Duke of Richmond, postponed (July 17). Mr. Gladstone thereupon advised the Queen, in exercise of the royal prerogative, to cancel the Warrant legalising purchase (July 20). There is another reference to the farm of La Haye Sainte, on the field of Waterloo, in Vol. I. p. 161.]

[1] [From the second leading article on September 7, 1871. Lord Derby's speech at Liverpool was on September 5, 1871; for another reference to the speech, see Vol. XXII. p. 149 *n.*; and for the *Daily Telegraph's* comment, Letter 45, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 159), and Appendix 17, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 570).]

[2] [The *Daily Telegraph* was at this time a warm supporter of Mr. Gladstone, of whom Ruskin was at this time not an admirer (see Vol. XXVIII. p. 403). For other references to the paper, see below, pp. 377, 499.]

[3] [For a note on the history of this paper, and on Ruskin's contributions to it, see Vol. XVIII. p. 95.]

[4] [Namely, a "violent Illiberal": see above, Letter 1, § 4 (p. 14).]

It is time you should know, and I will tell you plainly.[1] I am, and my father was before me, a violent Tory of the old school (Walter Scott's school, that is to say, and Homer's). I name these two out of the numberless great Tory writers, because they were my own two masters. I had Walter Scott's novels, and the *Iliad* (Pope's translation), for my only reading when I was a child, on weekdays: on Sundays this effect was tempered by *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Pilgrim's Progress;* my mother having it deeply in her heart to make an evangelical clergyman of me. Fortunately, I had an aunt more evangelical than my mother; and my aunt gave me cold mutton for Sunday's dinner, which—as I much preferred it hot—greatly diminished the influence of the *Pilgrim's Progress;* and the end of the matter was, that I got all the noble imaginative teaching of Defoe and Bunyan, and yet—am not an evangelical clergyman.

8. I had, however, still better teaching than theirs, and that compulsorily, and every day of the week. (Have patience with me in this egotism; it is necessary for many reasons that you should know what influences have brought me into the temper in which I write to you.)

Walter Scott and Pope's *Homer* were reading of my own election, but my mother forced me, by steady daily toil, to learn long chapters of the Bible by heart; as well as to read it every syllable through, aloud, hard names and all, from Genesis to the Apocalypse, about once a year; and to that discipline—patient, accurate, and resolute—I owe not only a knowledge of the book, which I find occasionally serviceable, but much of my general power of taking pains, and the best part of my taste in literature. From Walter Scott's novels I might easily, as I grew older, have fallen to other people's novels; and Pope might, perhaps, have led me to take Johnson's English, or Gibbon's,

[1] [§§ 2–8 of this letter, beginning "I am, and my father was before me," were used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where they appear, somewhat revised, as §§ 1–7 of vol. i. ch. i. In the case of this and later passages, similarly used in *Præterita*, the variations will be indicated in the Bibliographical Note to that book; annotations on such passages are also, for the most part, reserved for *Præterita*.]

as types of language; but, once knowing the 32nd of Deuteronomy, the 119th Psalm, the 15th of 1st Corinthians, the Sermon on the Mount, and most of the Apocalypse, every syllable by heart, and having always a way of thinking with myself what words meant, it was not possible for me, even in the foolishest times of youth, to write entirely superficial or formal English, and the affectation to write like Hooker[1] and George Herbert, which I now with shame confess of having long tried,[2] was the most innocent I could have fallen into.

4. From my own masters, then, Scott and Homer, I learned the Toryism which my best after-thought has only served to confirm.

That is to say a most sincere love of kings, and dislike of everybody who attempted to disobey them. Only, both by Homer and Scott, I was taught strange ideas about kings, which I find, for the present, much obsolete; for, I perceived that both the author of the *Iliad* and the author of *Waverley* made their kings, or king-loving persons, do harder work than anybody else. Tydides or Idomeneus always killed twenty Trojans to other people's one, and Redgauntlet speared more salmon than any of the Solway fishermen, and—which was particularly a subject of admiration to me,—I observed that they not only did more, but in proportion to their doings, got less, than other people[3]—nay, that the best of them were even ready to govern for nothing, and let their followers divide any quantity of spoil or profit. Of late it has seemed to me that the idea of a king has become exactly the contrary of this, and that it has been supposed the duty of superior persons generally to do less, and to get more than anybody else; so that it was, perhaps, quite as well that in those early days my contemplation of existent kingship was a very distant one, and my childish eyes wholly unacquainted with the splendour of courts.

[1] [Compare Vol. IV. p. 334, and Vol. XVIII. p. 32.]

[2] [This is a correction in one of Ruskin's copies for ". . . the affectation of trying to write."]

[3] [For a later reference to this passage, see below, p. 384.]

5. The aunt who gave me cold mutton on Sundays was my father's sister: she lived at Bridge-end, in the town of Perth, and had a garden full of gooseberry-bushes, sloping down to the Tay, with a door opening to the water, which ran past it clear-brown over the pebbles three or four feet deep; an infinite thing for a child to look down into.

6. My father began business as a wine-merchant, with no capital, and a considerable amount of debts bequeathed him by my grandfather. He accepted the bequest, and paid them all before he began to lay by anything for himself, for which his best friends called him a fool, and I, without expressing any opinion as to his wisdom, which I knew in such matters to be at least equal to mine, have written on the granite slab over his grave that he was "an entirely honest merchant."[1] As days went on he was able to take a house in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, No. 54 (the windows of it, fortunately for me, commanded a view of a marvellous iron post, out of which the water-carts were filled through beautiful little trap-doors, by pipes like boa-constrictors; and I was never weary of contemplating that mystery, and the delicious dripping consequent); and as years went on, and I came to be four or five years old, he could command a post-chaise and pair for two months in the summer, by help of which, with my mother and me, he went the round of his country customers (who liked to see the principal of the house his own traveller); so that, at a jog-trot pace, and through the panoramic opening of the four windows of a post-chaise, made more panoramic still to me because my seat was a little bracket in front (for we used to hire the chaise regularly for the two months out of Long Acre, and so could have it bracketed and pocketed as we liked), I saw all the high-roads, and most of the cross ones, of England and Wales, and great part of lowland Scotland, as far as Perth, where every other year we spent the whole summer; and I used to read the *Abbot* at Kinross, and the *Monastery* in Glen Farg, which I confused with "Glendearg," and thought

[1] [For the full epitaph, see Vol. XVII. p. lxxvii.]

force of France and England, confessing itself paralyzed, not so much by a real King, as by the shadow of one. All the harm the extant and visible King did was, to encourage the dressmakers and stone-masons in Paris,—to pay some idle people very large salaries,—and to make some, perhaps agreeably talkative, people, hold their tongues. That, I repeat, was all the harm he did, or could do; he corrupted nothing but what was voluntarily corruptible,—crushed nothing but what was essentially not solid: and it remained open to these Republican gentlemen to do anything they chose that was useful to France, or honourable to themselves, between earth and heaven, except only—print violent abuse of this shortish man, with a long nose, who stood, as they would have it, between them and heaven. But there they stood, spell-bound; the one thing suggesting itself to their frantic impotence as feasible, being to get this one shortish man assassinated. Their children would not grow, their corn would not ripen, and the stars would not roll, till they had got this one short man blown into shorter pieces.

If the shadow of a King can thus hold (how many?) millions of men, by their own confession, helpless for terror of it, what power must there be in the substance of one?

10. But this mass of republicans—vociferous, terrified, and mischievous—is the least part, as it is the vilest, of the great European populace who are lost for want of true kings. It is not these who stand idle, gibbering at a shadow, whom we have to mourn over;—they would have been good for little, even governed;—but those who work and do *not* gibber,—the quiet peasants in the fields of Europe, sad-browed, honest-hearted, full of natural tenderness and courtesy, who have none to help them, and none to teach; who have no kings, except those who rob them while they live, no tutors, except those who teach them—how to die.

11. I had an impatient remonstrance sent me the other day, by a country clergyman's wife, against that saying in my

former letter, "Dying has been more expensive to you than living."[1] Did I know, she asked, what a country clergyman's life was, and that he was the poor man's only friend?

Alas, I know it, and too well. What can be said of more deadly and ghastly blame against the clergy of England, or any other country, than that they are the poor man's only friends?

Have they, then, so betrayed their Master's charge and mind, in their preaching to the rich; so smoothed their words, and so sold their authority,—that, after twelve hundred years' entrusting of the gospel to them, there is no man in England (this is their chief plea for themselves forsooth) who will have mercy on the poor, but they; and so they must leave the word of God, and serve tables?[2]

12. I would not myself have said so much against English clergymen, whether of country or town. Three—and one dead makes four—of my dear friends (and I have not many dear friends) are country clergymen;[3] and I know the ways of every sort of them; my architectural tastes necessarily bringing me into near relations with the sort who like pointed arches and painted glass; and my old religious breeding having given me an unconquerable habit of taking up with any travelling tinker of evangelical principles I may come across; and even of reading, not without awe, the prophetic warnings of any persons belonging to that peculiarly well-informed "persuasion," such, for instance, as those of Mr. Zion Ward "concerning the fall of Lucifer, in a letter to a friend, Mr. William Dick, of Glasgow, price twopence,"[4] in which I read (as aforesaid, with unfeigned feelings of concern) that "the slain of the Lord shall be MAN-Y; that is, man, in whom death is, with all the works of carnality, shall be burnt up!"

[1] [See Letter 4, § 12 (p. 77).]

[2] [Acts vi. 2.]

[3] [For the Rev. W. L. Brown, Rector of Wendlebury, who died in 1862, see Vol. I. p. 464 *n.*; for the Rev. Osborne Gordon, Rector of Easthampstead, *Præterita*, ii. § 10; the Rev. W. Kingsley, Vicar of South Kilverton, Vol. XIII. p. 162 *n.* The fourth friend is probably the Rev. J. C. Hilliard, Rector of Cowley (Uxbridge).]

[4] [For a correction of this reference, see Letter 11, § 18 (p. 194).]

13. But I was not thinking either of English clergy, or of any other group of clergy, specially, when I wrote that sentence; but of the entire Clerkly or Learned Company, from the first priest of Egypt to the last ordained Belgravian curate, and of all the talk they have talked, and all the quarrelling they have caused, and all the gold they have had given them, to this day, when still "they are the poor man's only friends"—and by no means all of them that, heartily! though I see the Bishop of Manchester[1] has, of late, been superintending—I beg his pardon, Bishops don't superintend—looking on, or over, I should have said[2]—the recreations of his flock at the seaside; and "the thought struck him" that railroads were an advantage to them in taking them for their holiday out of Manchester. The thought may, perhaps, strike him, next, that a working man ought to be able to find "holy days"[3] *in* his home, as well as out of it.*

14. A year or two ago, a man who had at the time, and has still, important official authority over much of the business of the country, was speaking anxiously to me of the misery increasing in the suburbs and back streets of London, and debating, with the good help of the Oxford Regius Professor of Medicine[4]—who was second in council—what sanitary or moral remedy could be found. The debate languished, however, because of the strong conviction in the minds of all three of us that the misery was inevitable in the suburbs of so vast a city. At last,

* See § 159 (written seven years ago) in *Munera Pulveris* [Vol. XVII. p. 282].

[1] [Dr. James Fraser (1818–1885); appointed Bishop of Manchester in 1870. For another reference to the Bishop's commendation of holidays by rail, see Letter 22, § 24 (below, p. 390); and with this § 13 generally compare Letter 84, § 7 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 290). The address or sermon referred to by Ruskin is not included in the Bishop's *Life* or published *Sermons;* but the *Christian World* of September 23, 1871, noticed an address by him to employees of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. This elicited the following pamphlet: *A Plea for the Sabbath by A Layman, suggested by the Bishop of Manchester's Address to Railway Employés*, 1871.]

[2] [See Vol. XVII. p. 378; and compare Letter 62, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 513).]

[3] [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 36 (Vol. XVIII. p. 418).]

[4] [Dr. Acland. The "important official authority" was perhaps Dr. John Simon, Officer of Health to the Privy Council: see Vol. XVIII. p. xxii.]

either the minister or physician, I forget which, expressed the conviction. "Well," I answered, "then you must not have large cities." "That," answered the minister, "is an unpractical saying—you know we *must* have them, under existing circumstances."

I made no reply, feeling that it was vain to assure any man actively concerned in modern parliamentary business, that no measures were "practical" except those which touched the source of the evil opposed. All systems of government—all efforts of benevolence, are vain to repress the natural consequences of radical error. But any man of influence who had the sense and courage to refuse himself and his family one London season—to stay on his estate, and employ the shopkeepers in his own village, instead of those in Bond Street—would be "practically" dealing with, and conquering, this evil, so far as in him lay; and contributing with his whole might to the thorough and final conquest of it.

15. Not but that I know how to meet it directly also, if any London landlords choose so to attack it. You are beginning to hear something of what Miss Hill has done in Marylebone, and of the change brought about by her energy and good sense in the centre of one of the worst districts of London.[1] It is difficult enough, I admit, to find a woman of average sense and tenderness enough to be able for such work; but there are, indeed, other such in the world, only three-fourths of them now get lost in pious lecturing, or altar-cloth sewing; and the wisest remaining fourth stay at home as quiet house-wives, not seeing their way to wider action; nevertheless, any London landlord who will content himself with moderate and fixed rent (I get five per cent. from Miss Hill, which is surely enough!), assuring his tenants of secure possession if that is paid, so that they need not fear having their rent raised, if they improve their houses; and who will secure also a quiet bit

[1] [See Vol. XIX. pp. xxiv., 213–214; and for later references in *Fors* to Miss Hill's work, see below, p. 364; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 63 *n.*, 81, 173; Vol. XXIX. p. 354.]

of ground for their children to play in, instead of the street,—has established all the necessary conditions of success; and I doubt not that Miss Hill herself could find co-workers able to extend the system of management she has originated, and shown to be so effective.

But the best that can be done in this way will be useless ultimately, unless the deep source of the misery be cut off. While Miss Hill, with intense effort and noble power, has partially moralized a couple of acres in Marylebone, at least fifty square miles of lovely country have been Demoralized outside London, by the increasing itch of the upper classes to live where they can get some gossip in their idleness, and show each other their dresses.

16. That life of theirs must come to an end soon, both here and in Paris, but to what end, it is, I trust, in their own power still to decide. If they resolve to maintain to the last the present system of spending the rent taken from the rural districts in the dissipation of the capitals, they will not always find they can secure a quiet time, as the other day in Dublin, by withdrawing the police,[1] nor that park-railings are the only thing which (police being duly withdrawn) will go down.[2] Those favourite castle battlements of mine, their internal "police" withdrawn, will go down also; and I should be sorry to see it;—the lords and ladies, houseless at least in shooting season, perhaps sorrier, though they *did* find the grey turrets dismal in winter time. If they would yet have them for autumn, they must have them for winter. Consider, fair lords and ladies, by the time you marry, and choose your dwelling-places, there are for you but forty or fifty winters more in whose dark days you may see the snow fall and wreathe. There will be no snow in Heaven, I presume—still less elsewhere (if lords and ladies ever miss of Heaven).

[1] [On August 6, 1871, an Amnesty meeting held in the Phœnix Park was dispersed by the police, and many injuries were inflicted. The affair was the subject of debate in Parliament (August 17), and shortly afterwards the Government gave way on the point and allowed meetings to be held in the Park (see *Times*, August 28).]

[2] [For another reference to the pulling down of the Hyde Park railings at the time of the Reform agitation, see above, p. 36.]

17. And that some may, is perhaps conceivable, for there are more than a few things to be managed on an English estate, and to be "faithful" in those few[1] cannot be interpreted as merely abstracting the rent of them. Nay, even the *Telegraph's* beau-ideal of the landowner, from a mechanical point of view, may come short, somewhat. "Cultivating huge farms for himself with abundant machinery;—"[2] Is that Lord Derby's ideal also, may it be asked? The Scott-reading of my youth haunts me, and I seem still listening to the (perhaps a little too long) speeches of the Black Countess who appears terrifically through the sliding panel in *Peveril of the Peak*, about "her sainted Derby."[3] Would Saint Derby's ideal, or his Black Countess's, of due ordinance for their castle and estate of Man, have been a minimum of Man therein, and an abundance of machinery? In fact, only the Trinacrian Legs of Man,[4] transposed into many spokes of wheels—no use for "stalwart arms" any more—and less than none for inconveniently "heroic" souls?

18. "Cultivating huge farms for himself!" I don't even see, after the sincerest efforts to put myself into a mechanical point of view, how it is to be done. For himself? Is he to eat the corn-ricks then? Surely such a beau-ideal is more Utopian than any of mine? Indeed, whether it be praise or blame-worthy, it is not so easy to cultivate anything wholly for oneself, nor to consume, oneself, the products of cultivation. I have, indeed, before now, hinted to you that perhaps the "consumer" was not so necessary a

[1] [See Matthew xxv. 23.]
[2] [See above, § 1.]
[3] [*Peveril*, ch. v.]
[4] [The Earls of Derby quartered the arms of the Isle of Man, on receiving the island from the King of England. "Three legs armed *Proper*, conjoined in Fess at the upper Part of the Thigh, flexed in Triangle, garnished and spurred *Topaz*. This coat is quartered by the Right Honourable William, Earl of Derby. In ancient Times, Soldiers that either had sold or otherwise lost their Armour by negligence were (by a military Law) punished with Death, as he that runneth from his Captain" (Guillim, p. 347, 1724 edition). The point of the device (adopted by the Isle in 1270) is, however, better gathered from the motto *Quocunque jeceris stabit*. For the word "Trinacrian," see Vol. XXV. p. 296 *n*.]

person economically, as has been supposed;[1] nevertheless, it is not in his own mere eating and drinking, or even his picture-collecting, that a false lord injures the poor. It is in his bidding and forbidding—or worse still, in ceasing to do either. I have given you another of Giotto's pictures, this month, his imagination of Injustice,[2] which he has seen done in his time, as we in ours; and I am sorry to observe that his Injustice lives in a battlemented castle and in a mountain country, it appears; the gates of it between rocks, and in the midst of a wood; but in Giotto's time, woods were too many, and towns too few. Also, Injustice has indeed very ugly talons to his fingers, like Envy; and an ugly quadruple hook to his lance, and other ominous resemblances to the "hooked bird,"[3] the falcon, which both knights and ladies too much delighted in. Nevertheless Giotto's main idea about him is, clearly, that he "sits in the gate"[4] pacifically, with a cloak thrown over his chain-armour (you can just see the links of it appear at his throat), and a plain citizen's cap for a helmet, and his sword sheathed, while all robbery and violence have way in the wild places round him,—he heedless.

Which is, indeed, the depth of Injustice; not the harm you do, but that you permit to be done,—hooking perhaps here and there something to you with your clawed weapon meanwhile. The baronial type exists still, I fear, in such manner, here and there, in spite of improving centuries.

19. My friends, we have been thinking, perhaps, to-day, more than we ought of our masters' faults,—scarcely enough of our own. If you would have the upper classes do *their* duty, see that you also do yours. See that you can obey good laws,[5] and good lords, or law-wards,[6] if you once get them—that you believe in goodness enough to know what

[1] [See Letter 7, § 14 (p. 127).]
[2] [Compare *Giotto and his Works in Padua*, Vol. XXIV. p. 121.]
[3] [For the epithet γαμψώνυξ, see "The Eagle of Elis," § 10 (Vol. XX. p. 401).]
[4] [Psalms lxix. 12.]
[5] [See above, Letters 2, § 22, and 7, § 20 (pp. 44, 131).]
[6] [On this meaning of "lords," compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 88 (Vol. XVIII. p. 138 n.).]

a good law is. A good law is one that holds, whether you recognize and pronounce it or not; a bad law is one that cannot hold, however much you ordain and pronounce it. That is the mighty truth which Carlyle has been telling you for a quarter of a century—once for all he told it you, and the landowners, and all whom it concerns, in the third book of *Past and Present* (1845, buy Chapman and Hall's second edition if you can, it is good print, and read it till you know it by heart[1]), and from that day to this, whatever there is in England of dullest and insolentest may be always known by the natural instinct it has to howl against Carlyle. Of late, matters coming more and more to crisis, the liberty men seeing their way, as they think, more and more broad and bright before them, and still this too legible and steady old signpost saying, That it is *not* the way, lovely as it looks, the outcry against it becomes deafening. Now, I tell you once for all, Carlyle is the only living writer who has spoken the absolute and perpetual truth about yourselves and your business; and exactly in proportion to the inherent weakness of brain in your lying guides, will be their animosity against Carlyle. Your lying guides, observe, I say —not meaning that they lie wilfully—but that their nature is to do nothing else. For in the modern Liberal there is a new and wonderful form of misguidance. Of old, it was bad enough that the blind should lead the blind;[2] still, with

[1] [Ruskin's copy of this edition of the book is now in the British Museum, thus inscribed: "Alfred Macfee, From John Ruskin. 10th January 1887," and with the following autograph letter inserted:—

"BRANTWOOD, 10*th Jan.*, 1887.

"MY DEAR BOY,—It chances that this is one of my—more or less—so far as I understand them—Fortunate days; whether they lead deathwards faster, I do not know. But your letter pleases me, and I have sent you a book which I read no more because it has become a part of myself, and my old marks in it are now useless, because in my heart I mark it all. God's peace and strength be with you. Faithfully yours, JOHN RUSKIN."

Two lithograph copies of this letter are inserted at the end, and on the last sheet of the cover are outlines of profiles of capitals, etc., by Ruskin. The book is much scored by him. The letter to Alfred Macfee was printed in *World Literature* (the supplement to *Igdrasil*, edited by William Marwick), March 1892, vol. i. p. 106; and Ruskin's marks were noted, in the greatest detail, in the same publication, pp. 53, 65, 90–92, 105–106.]

[2] [Matthew xv. 14.]

dog and stick, or even timid walking with recognized need of dog and stick, if not to be had, such leadership might come to good end enough; but now a worse disorder has come upon you, that the squinting should lead the squinting. Now the nature of bat, or mole, or owl, may be undesirable, at least in the day-time, but worse may be imagined. The modern Liberal politico-economist of the Stuart Mill school is essentially of the type of a flat-fish—one eyeless side of him always in the mud, and one eye, on the side that *has* eyes, down in the corner of his mouth,—not a desirable guide for man or beast. There was an article—I believe it got in by mistake, but the Editor, of course, won't say so —in the *Contemporary Review*, two months back, on Mr. Morley's Essays, by a Mr. Buchanan, with an incidental page on Carlyle in it, unmatchable (to the length of my poor knowledge) for obliquitous platitude in the mud-walks of literature.[1]

20. Read your Carlyle, then, with all your heart, and with the best of brain you can give; and you will learn from him first, the eternity of good law, and the need of obedience to it: then, concerning your own immediate business, you will learn farther this, that the beginning of all good law, and nearly the end of it, is in these two ordinances,—That every man shall do good work for his bread: and secondly, that every man shall have good bread for his work. But the first of these is the only one you have to think of. If you are resolved that the work shall be good, the bread will be sure; if not,—believe me, there is neither steam plough nor steam mill, go they never so glibly, that will win it from the earth long, either for you, or the Ideal Landed Proprietor.[2]

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[1] [*Contemporary Review* for June 1871, vol. xvii. pp. 319–337: "Mr. John Morley's Essays," by Robert Buchanan, whose attack on Carlyle will be found on pp. 328–329.]

[2] [See above, § 1; and for the reference to Carlyle, see *Munera Pulveris*, § 158 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 280).]

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Drawn thus by Giotto in the Chapel of the Arena at Padua

# LETTER 11

## THE ABBOT'S CHAPEL[1]

DENMARK HILL,
*15th October*, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—A day seldom passes, now that people begin to notice these Letters a little, without my receiving a remonstrance on the absurdity of writing "so much above the level" of those whom I address.[2]

I have said, however, that eventually you shall understand, if you care to understand, every word in these pages. Through all this year I have only been putting questions; some of them such as have puzzled the wisest, and which may, for a long time yet, prove too hard for you and me: but, next year, I will go over all the ground again, answering the questions, where I know of any answers; or making them plain for your examination, when I know of none.

2. But, in the meantime, be it admitted, for argument's sake, that this way of writing, which is easy to me, and which most educated persons can easily understand, *is* very much above your level. I want to know why it is assumed so quietly that your brains must always be at a low level. Is it essential to the doing of the work by which England exists, that its workmen should not be able to understand scholar's English (remember, I only assume mine to be so for argument's sake), but only newspaper's English? I chanced, indeed, to take up a number of *Belgravia* the other day, which contained a violent attack on an old enemy of mine—*Blackwood's Magazine*;[3] and I enjoyed the attack mightily, until *Belgravia* declared, by way of *coup de grâce* to *Blackwood*, that something which *Blackwood* had spoken of as settled in one way had

[1] ["Furness Abbey" and "Peasant Paymasters" (see below, § 5) were rejected titles for this Letter. For the actual title, see § 3.]

[2] [Compare above, p. 79.]

[3] [See Vol. III. pp. xviii., xliii.–xliv.]

been irrevocably settled the other way,—"settled," said triumphant *Belgravia*, "in seventy-two newspapers."[1]

Seventy-two newspapers, then, it seems—or, with a margin, eighty-two,—perhaps, to be perfectly safe, we had better say ninety-two—are enough to settle anything in this England of ours, for the present. But, irrevocably, I doubt. If, perchance, you workmen should reach the level of understanding scholar's English instead of newspaper's English, things might a little unsettle themselves again; and, in the end, might even get into positions uncontemplated by the ninety-two newspapers,—contemplated only by the laws of Heaven, and settled by them, some time since, as positions which, if things ever got out of, they would need to get into again.

And, for my own part, I cannot at all understand why well-educated people should still so habitually speak of you as beneath their level, and needing to be written down to, with condescending simplicity, as flat-foreheaded creatures of another race, unredeemable by any Darwinism.

8. I was waiting last Saturday afternoon on the platform of the railway station at Furness Abbey (the station itself is tastefully placed so that you can see it, and nothing else but it, through the east window of the Abbot's Chapel, over the ruined altar), and a party of the workmen employed on another line, wanted for the swiftly progressive neighbourhood of Dalton,[2] were taking Sabbatical refreshment at the tavern recently established at the south side of the said Abbot's Chapel. Presently, the train whistling for them, they came out in a highly refreshed state, and made for it as fast as they could by the tunnel under the line, taking very long steps to keep their balance in the direction of motion, and securing themselves, laterally, by

[1] [The article, by G. A. Sala, was entitled "The Cant of Modern Criticism," and appeared in *Belgravia* for November 1867, vol. iv. pp. 45–55. Sala takes up the title of a political article in *Blackwood*, No. 623, "The Question Settled," and says "Toryism is objectionable enough, under any circumstances; but stale Toryism! and stale Scotch Toryism! Did you ever try to munch an ancient 'scon'—a stale Scotch bun? Dead-Sea apples are juicy and succulent compared with *that* diet. The question settled! Why, it was settled months ago, in five-and-seventy newspapers" (p. 47).]

[2] [Dalton-in-Furness, the seat of numerous iron-ore mines.]

hustling the wall, or any chance passengers. They were dressed universally in brown rags, which, perhaps, they felt to be the comfortablest kind of dress; they had, most of them, pipes, which I really believe to be more enjoyable than cigars; they got themselves adjusted in their carriages by the aid of snatches of vocal music, and looked at us (I had charge of a lady and her two young daughters)[1] with supreme indifference, as indeed at creatures of another race; pitiable, perhaps,—certainly disagreeable and objectionable—but, on the whole, despicable, and not to be minded. We, on our part, had the insolence to pity them for being dressed in rags, and for being packed so close in the third-class carriages: the two young girls bore being run against patiently; and when a thin boy of fourteen or fifteen, the most drunk of the company, was sent back staggering to the tavern for a forgotten pickaxe, we would, any of us, I am sure, have gone and fetched it for him, if he had asked us. For we were all in a very virtuous and charitable temper: we had had an excellent dinner at the new inn, and had earned that portion of our daily bread by admiring the Abbey all the morning. So we pitied the poor workmen doubly—first, for being so wicked as to get drunk at four in the afternoon; and, secondly, for being employed in work so disgraceful as throwing up clods of earth into an embankment, instead of spending the day, like us, in admiring the Abbey: and I, who am always making myself a nuisance to people with my political economy, inquired timidly of my friend whether she thought it all quite right. And she said, certainly not; but what could be done? It was of no use trying to make such men admire the Abbey, or to keep them from getting drunk. They wouldn't do the one, and they would do the other—they were quite an unmanageable sort of people, and had been so for generations.[2]

4. Which, indeed, I knew to be partly the truth, but it only made the thing seem to me more wrong than it

[1] [For another reference to them, see Letter 80, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 176).]

[2] [For other references to "the navvies of Furness," see Letters 64, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 568), and 81, § 4 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 194).]

did before, since here were not only the actual two or three dozen of unmanageable persons, with much taste for beer, and none for architecture; but these implied the existence of many unmanageable persons before and after them,—nay, a long ancestral and filial unmanageableness. They were a Fallen Race, every way incapable, as I acutely felt, of appreciating the beauty of *Modern Painters*, or fathoming the significance of *Fors Clavigera*.

5. But what they had done to deserve their fall, or what I had done to deserve the privilege of being the author of those valuable books, remained obscure to me; and indeed, whatever the deservings may have been on either side, in this and other cases of the kind, it is always a marvel to me that the arrangement and its consequences are accepted so patiently. For observe what, in brief terms, the arrangement is. Virtually, the entire business of the world turns on the clear necessity of getting on table, hot or cold, if possible, meat—but, at least, vegetables,—at some hour of the day, for all of us: for you labourers, we will say at noon; for us æsthetical persons, we will say at eight in the evening; for we like to have done our eight hours' work of admiring abbeys before we dine. But, at some time of day, the mutton and turnips, or, since mutton itself is only a transformed state of turnips, we may say, as sufficiently typical of everything, turnips only, must absolutely be got for us both.[1] And nearly every problem of State policy and economy, as at present understood, and practised, consists in some device for persuading you labourers to go and dig up dinner for us reflective and æsthetical persons, who like to sit still, and think, or admire. So that when we get to the bottom of the matter, we find the inhabitants of this earth broadly divided into two great masses;—the peasant paymasters[2]—spade in hand, original and imperial producers of turnips; and, waiting on them all

[1] [Ruskin's reference to this passage in his Index to vols. i. and ii. is, "Turnips, as generally representing food; phenomena of their distribution"; and he compares Letter 8, § 5, p. 137: "snatching the roots from him as he digs."]

[2] ["The peasant paymaster; *cf.* Letter 15, § 1, Letter 16 (invaluable), and Letter 47, §§ 15, 16."—*MS. note in Author's copy.* See pp. 260, 279 *seq.*; and Vol. XXVIII. pp. 199, 200.]

round, a crowd of polite persons, modestly expectant of turnips, for some—too often theoretical—service. There is, first, the clerical person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for giving him moral advice; then the legal person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for telling him, in black-letter, that his house is his own;[1] there is, thirdly, the courtly person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for presenting a celestial appearance to him; there is, fourthly, the literary person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for talking daintily to him;[2] and there is, lastly, the military person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for standing, with a cocked hat on, in the middle of the field, and exercising a moral influence upon the neighbours.[3] Nor is the peasant to be pitied if these arrangements are all faithfully carried out. If he really gets moral advice from his moral adviser; if his house is, indeed, maintained to be his own, by his legal adviser; if courtly persons, indeed, present a celestial appearance to him;[4] and literary persons, indeed, talk beautiful words: if, finally, his scarecrow do, indeed, stand quiet, as with a stick through the middle of it, producing, if not always a wholesome terror, at least, a picturesque effect, and colour-contrast of scarlet with green,—they are all of them worth their daily turnips. But if, perchance, it happen that he get *im*moral advice from his moralist, or if his lawyer advise him that his house is *not* his own; and his bard, story-teller, or other literary charmer, begin to charm him unwisely,[5] not with beautiful words, but with obscene and ugly words—and he be readier with his response in vegetable produce for these than for any other sort; finally, if his quiet scarecrow become disquiet, and seem likely to bring upon him a whole flight of scarecrows out of his neighbours' fields,—

[1] [For an explanation of this passage, see Letter 47, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 188).]

[2] [Compare Letters 81, § 12 *n.*, and 86, § 7 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. pp. 205, 341).]

[3] [The reference to this passage in the Index is:—

"Army, standing, function of, under type of scarecrow. In that passage I ought to have indicated the function of the quiet scarecrow as that of keeping order in one's fields. *Compare* Letter 2, end of § 10, and passage on Horse Guards, Letter 19, § 3; the parallel domestic *mischief* is described in Letter 8, § 5."

For these references, see pp. 37, 321, 136–137.]

[4] [For an explanation of this passage, see Letter 45, § 17 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 162).]

[5] [See Psalms lviii. 5.]

the combined fleets of Russia, Prussia, etc., as my friend and your trustee, Mr. Cowper-Temple, has it (see above, Letter 2, § 20[1]), it is time to look into such arrangements under their several heads.*

6. Well looked after, however, all these arrangements have their advantages, and a certain basis of reason and propriety. But there are two other arrangements which have no basis on either, and which are very widely adopted, nevertheless, among mankind, to their great misery.

I must expand a little the type of my primitive peasant before defining these. You observe, I have not named among the polite persons giving theoretical service in exchange for vegetable diet, the large, and lately become exceedingly polite, class, of artists. For a true artist is only a beautiful development of tailor or carpenter.† As the peasant provides the dinner, so the artist provides the clothes and house: in the tailoring and tapestry producing function, the best of artists ought to be the peasant's wife herself, when properly emulative of Queens Penelope, Bertha, and Maude;[2] and in the house-producing-and-painting

* This is the most important passage of definition in the course of the book hitherto.[3]—*Index to Vols. I. and II.* (under "Working Men").]

† Artists are included under the term Workmen; but I see the passage is inaccurate,—for I of course meant to include musicians among artists, and therefore among working men; but musicians are not "developments of tailor or carpenter." Also it may be questioned why I do not count the work given to construct poetry, when I count that given to perform music; this will be explained in another place.[4]—*Index to Vols. I. and II.* (under "Artists").

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[1] [Above, p. 43.]

[2] [For other references to Penelope, as typical spinster, see Vol. XV. p. 400, and Vol. XVIII. p. 117. For other references to Queen Matilda and her tapestry, see Vol. X. p. 76, and Vol. XX. p. 269. The "Bertha" here referred to was the daughter of Burkhard, Duke of the Alemanni, and wife of Rudolf II., King of Burgundy. After Rudolf's death in 937 she acted as regent for her infant son, Konrad. She is represented on seals and other monuments of the time as sitting on her throne spinning.]

[3] [Similarly in Letter 67, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 644), Ruskin refers to §§ 3–5 here as "the most pregnant pages in the entire series of these letters."]

[4] [It may be noted that in Letter 89, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 410), where Ruskin enumerates the twenty-one essential trades, he includes "musicians" but not "poets." There are many places in *Fors* in which he insists on the essential place of music in education; but he does not give the explanation here promised, unless it be in Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. p. 85), where he says that "the vital form of real

function, though concluding itself in such painted chambers as those of the Vatican, the artist is still typically and essentially a carpenter or mason; first carving wood and stone, then painting the same for preservation;—if ornamentally, all the better. And, accordingly, you see these letters of mine are addressed to the "workmen and labourers" of England,—that is to say, to the providers of houses and dinners, for themselves, and for all men, in this country, as in all others.*

Considering these two sorts of Providers, then, as one great class, surrounded by the suppliant persons for whom, together with themselves, they have to make provision, it is evident that they both have need originally of two things —land, and tools. Clay to be subdued; and plough, or potter's wheel, wherewith to subdue it.

7. Now, as aforesaid, so long as the polite surrounding personages are content to offer their salutary advice, their legal information, etc., to the peasant, for what these articles are verily worth in vegetable produce, all is perfectly fair; but if any of the polite persons contrive to get hold of the peasant's land, or of his tools, and put him into the "position of William,"[1] and make him pay annual interest, first for the wood that he planes, and then for the plane he planes it with!—my friends, polite or otherwise, these two arrangements cannot be considered as settled yet, even by the ninety-two newspapers, with all Belgravia to back them.[2]

Not by the newspapers, nor by Belgravia, nor even by the Cambridge Catechism,[3] or the Cambridge Professor of Political Economy.

* As in the title of the work, by workmen I mean people who must use their heads as well as their hands for what they do; by labourers, those who use their hands only.—*Index to Vols. I. and II.* (under "Working Men").

poetry" is "simple singing for heart's delight." Perhaps what he had here in his mind was his conception of song as essentially including the setting of right words to right tunes: see the Preface to *Rock Honeycomb* (Vol. XXXI.).]

[1] [See Letter 1, §§ 13–14 (pp. 24–26).]

[2] [See above, § 2.]

[3] [Mrs. Fawcett's: see above, p. 24.]

8. Look to the beginning of the second chapter in the last edition of Professor Fawcett's *Manual of Political Economy* (Macmillan, 1869, p. 105). The chapter purports to treat of the "Classes among whom wealth is distributed." And thus it begins:—

"We have described the requisites of production to be three: land, labour, and capital. Since, therefore, land, labour, and capital are essential to the production of wealth, it is natural to suppose that the wealth which is produced ought to be possessed by those who own the land, labour, and capital which have respectively contributed to its production. The share of wealth which is thus allotted to the possessor of the land is termed rent; the portion allotted to the labourer is termed wages, and the remuneration of the capitalist is termed profit.[1]

You observe that in this very meritoriously clear sentence both the possessor of the land and the possessor of the capital are assumed to be absolutely idle persons. If they contributed any labour to the business, and so confused themselves with the labourer, the problem of triple division would become complicated directly;—in point of fact, they do occasionally employ themselves somewhat, and become deserving, therefore, of a share, not of rent only, nor of profit only, but of wages also. And every now and then, as I noted in my last letter,[2] there is an outburst of admiration in some one of the ninety-two newspapers,[3] at the amount of "work" done by persons of the superior classes; respecting which, however, you remember that I also advised you that a great deal of it was only a form of competitive play. In the main, therefore, the statement of the Cambridge Professor may be admitted to be correct as to the existing facts; the Holders of land and capital being virtually in a state of Dignified Repose, as the Labourer is in a state of (at least, I hear it always so announced in the ninety-two newspapers) Dignified Labour.

9. But Professor Fawcett's sentence, though, as I have just said, in comparison with most writings on the subject,

[1] ["See Letter 22, § 14" (p. 381).—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]
[2] [Not *last* letter, but Letter 9, § 2 *n.* (p. 147).]
[3] [See above, p. 182.]

meritoriously clear, yet is not as clear as it might be,—still less as scientific as it might be. It is, indeed, gracefully ornamental, in the use, in its last clause, of the three words, "share," "portion," and "remuneration," for the same thing; but this is not the clearest imaginable language. The sentence, strictly put, should run thus:—"The portion of wealth which is thus allotted to the possessor of the land is termed rent; the portion allotted to the labourer is termed wages; and the portion allotted to the capitalist is termed profit."

And you may at once see the advantage of reducing the sentence to these more simple terms; for Professor Fawcett's ornamental language has this danger in it, that "Remuneration," being so much grander a word than "Portion," in the very roll of it seems to imply rather a thousand pounds a day than three-and-sixpence. And until there be scientific reason shown for anticipating the portions to be thus disproportioned, we have no right to suggest their being so, by ornamental variety of language.

10. Again, Professor Fawcett's sentence is, I said, not entirely scientific. He founds the entire principle of allotment on the phrase "it is natural to suppose." But I never heard of any other science founded on what it was natural to suppose. Do the Cambridge mathematicians, then, in these advanced days, tell their pupils that it is natural to suppose the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones? Nay, in the present case, I regret to say it has sometimes been thought wholly *un*natural to suppose any such thing; and so exceedingly unnatural, that to receive either a "remuneration," or a "portion," or a "share," for the loan of anything, without personally working, was held by Dante and other such simple persons in the Middle Ages to be one of the worst of the sins that could be committed *against* nature: and the receivers of such interest were put in the same circle of Hell with the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.[1]

[1] [*Inferno*, xi. 50: see Vol. XVII. pp. 220, 560. For other questions addressed to Professor Fawcett, see below, pp. 316–318, 378.]

11. And it is greatly to be apprehended that if ever our workmen, under the influences of Mr. Scott and Mr. Street,[1] come indeed to admire the Abbot's Chapel at Furness more than the railroad station, they may become possessed of a taste for Gothic opinions as well as Gothic arches, and think it "natural to suppose" that a workman's tools should be his own property.

Which I, myself, having been always given to Gothic opinions, do, indeed suppose, very strongly; and intend to try with all my might to bring about that arrangement wherever I have any influence;—the arrangement itself being feasible enough, if we can only begin by not leaving our pickaxes behind us after taking Sabbatical refreshment.[2]

12. But let me again, and yet again, warn you, that only by beginning so,—that is to say, by doing what is in your own power to achieve of plain right,—can you ever bring about any of your wishes; or, indeed, can you, to any practical purpose, begin to wish. Only by quiet and decent exaltation of your own habits can you qualify yourselves to discern what is just, or to define even what is possible. I hear you are, at last, beginning to draw up your wishes in a definite manner (I challenged you to do so, in *Time and Tide*,[3] four years ago, in vain), and you mean to have them at last "represented in Parliament"; but I hear of small question yet among you, whether they be just wishes, and can be represented to the power of everlasting Justice, as things not only natural to be supposed, but necessary to be done. For *she* accepts no representation of things in beautiful language, but takes her own view of them, with her own eyes.

18. I did, indeed, cut out a slip from the *Birmingham Morning News*, last September (12th), containing a letter written by a gentleman signing himself "Justice" in person,

[1] [For another reference to Scott and Street as the leading architects of the Gothic revival, see Vol. XIX. p. 23.]

[2] [See above, § 3.]

[3] [See *Time and Tide*, Letter III. (Vol. XVII. p. 325).]

and professing himself an engineer, who talked very grandly about the "individual and social laws of our nature": but *he* had arrived at the inconvenient conclusions that "no individual has a natural right to hold property in land," and that "all land sooner or later must become public property." I call this an inconvenient conclusion, because I really think you would find yourselves greatly inconvenienced if your wives couldn't go into the garden to cut a cabbage, without getting leave from the Lord Mayor and Corporation; and if the same principle is to be carried out as regards tools, I beg to state to Mr. Justice-in-Person, that if anybody and everybody is to use my own particular palette and brushes, I resign my office of Professor of Fine Art.* Perhaps, when we become really acquainted with the true Justice in Person, not professing herself an engineer, she may suggest to us, as a Natural Supposition,—"That land should be given to those who can use *it*, and tools to those who can use *them*;"[1] and I have a notion you will find this a very tenable supposition also.

14. I have given you, this month, the last of the pictures I want you to see from Padua;—Giotto's Image of Justice[2]—which, you observe, differs somewhat from the Image of Justice we used to set up in England, above insurance offices, and the like. Bandaged close about the eyes, our English Justice was wont to be, with a pair of grocers' scales in her hand, wherewith, doubtless, she was accustomed to weigh out accurately their shares to the landlords, and portions to the labourers, and remunerations to the capitalists.[3] But Giotto's Justice has no bandage about her eyes (Albert Dürer's has them *round* open, and flames flashing from them),[4] and weighs, not with scales, but

* *Cf.* Letter 22, §§ 12–14, and Letter 25, § 25 (Question 1) (pp. 380, 470).—*Index to Vols. I. and II.*

[1] [For a re-statement of this proposition by Ruskin, in a later Letter, see below, p. 381. Compare *Unto this Last*, §§ 62, 63 (Vol. XVII. p. 87).]
[2] [Compare *Giotto and his Works in Padua*, Vol. XXIV. p. 116.]
[3] [See above, §§ 8, 9.]
[4] [Compare Vol. XIX. p. 273, and Vol. XXIV. p. 116.]

with her own hands; and weighs not merely the shares, or remunerations of men, but the worth of them; and finding them worth this or that, gives them what they deserve—death, or honour. Those are her forms of "Remuneration."

15. Are you sure that you are ready to accept the decrees of this true goddess, and to be chastised or rewarded by her, as is your due, being seen through and through to your heart's core? Or will you still abide by the level balance of the blind Justice of old time; or rather, by the oblique balance of the squinting Justice of our modern geological Mud-Period?—the mud, at present, becoming also more slippery under the feet—I beg pardon, the belly—of squinting Justice, than was once expected; becoming, indeed (as it is announced, even by Mr. W. P. Price, M.P., chairman at the last half-yearly meeting of the Midland Railway Company), quite "delicate ground."

The said chairman, you will find, by referring to the *Pall Mall Gazette* of August 17th, 1871, having received a letter from Mr. Bass on the subject of the length of time that the servants of the company were engaged in labour, and their inadequate remuneration, made the following remarks:—"He (Mr. Bass) is treading on very delicate ground. The remuneration of labour, the value of which, like the value of gold itself, depends altogether on the one great universal law of supply and demand, is a question on which there is very little room for sentiment. He, as a very successful tradesman, knows very well how much the success of commercial operations depends on the observance of that law; and we, sitting here as your representatives, cannot altogether close our eyes to it."

16. Now it is quite worth your while to hunt out that number of the *Pall Mall Gazette* in any of your free libraries, because a quaint chance in the placing of the type has produced a lateral comment on these remarks of Mr. W. P. Price, M.P.

Take your carpenter's rule, apply it level under the words, "Great Universal Law of Supply and Demand,"

and read the line it marks off in the other column of the same page. It marks off this, "In Khorassan one-third of the whole population has perished from starvation, and at Ispahan no less than 27,000 souls."[1]

Of course you will think it no business of yours if people are starved in Persia. But the Great "Universal" Law of Supply and Demand may some day operate in the same manner over here; and even in the Mud-and-Flat-fish period, John Bull may not like to have his belly flattened for him to that extent.

17. You have heard it said occasionally that I am not a practical person.[2] It may be satisfactory to you to know, on the contrary, that this whole plan of mine is founded on the very practical notion of making you round persons instead of flat. Round and merry, instead of flat and sulky. And my beau-ideal is not taken from "a mechanical point of view,"[3] but is one already realised. I saw last summer, in the flesh, as round and merry a person as I ever desire to see. He was tidily dressed—not in brown rags, but in green velveteen; he wore a jaunty hat, with a feather in it, a little on one side; he was not drunk, but the effervescence of his shrewd good-humour filled the room all about him; and he could sing like a robin. You may say "like a nightingale," if you like, but I think robins' singing the best, myself;[4] only I hardly ever hear

[1] [For another reference to this famine in Persia, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 36 (Vol. XXII. p. 149).]

[2] [See above, p. 175; and below, p. 279. Compare Vol. XXVIII. p. 14, and Vol. XXIX. p. 358. On the word "practical," see also, above, p. 59, and below, p. 449.]

[3] [See the extract from the *Daily Telegraph*, above, p. 166.]

[4] ["'Why,' asks a writer to *St. George* in 1899, 'does Mr. Ruskin like robins' singing better than nightingales'? (*Fors*). Is it not for the same reason that he "had rather see a brown harvest-field than the brightest Aurora Borealis" (*Modern Painters*, vol. ii.), and that the Jura pastures and forests were more to him than the grandest scenes of the New Continent could have been? (*Seven Lamps*). Is it not, in fact, because the robins, and the harvest-field, and the Alpine scenery were suggestive to him of human associations and domestic sympathies; and "seen with human eyes, there is nothing else but man; all animals and beings beside him are only made that they may change into him: the world truly exists only in the presence of man, acts only in the passion of man" [above, p. 85]. Strange how these detached utterances, delivered at long intervals of time (1849, 1871, 1883) bind

it now, for the young ladies of England have had nearly all the robins shot, to wear in their hats, and the bird-stuffers are exporting the few remaining to America.

This merry round person was a Tyrolese peasant; and I hold it an entirely practical proceeding, since I find my idea of felicity actually produced in the Tyrol, to set about the production of it, here, on Tyrolese principles; which, you will find, on inquiry, have not hitherto implied the employment of steam, nor submission to the great Universal Law of Supply and Demand, nor even Demand for the Local Supply of a "Liberal" government. But they do imply labour of all hands on pure earth and in fresh air. They do imply obedience to government which endeavours to be just, and faith in a religion* which endeavours to be moral.[1] And they result in strength of limbs, clearness of throats, roundness of waists, and pretty jackets, and still prettier corsets, to fit them.

18. I must pass, disjointedly, to matters which, in a written letter, would have been put in a postscript; but I do not care, in a printed one, to leave a useless gap in the type. First, the reference in § 12 of last number [p. 178] to the works of Mr. Zion Ward, is incorrect. The passage I quoted is not in the "Letter to a Friend," price twopence, but in the "Origin of Evil Discovered," price fourpence. (John Bolton, Steel House Lane, Birmingham.) And, by the way, I wish that booksellers would save themselves, and

* Religion. It is of no use to give references to the occurrence of this word, which is not yet anywhere completely defined;[2] only observe that I always use it impartially, of all the forms of submission to a Supreme Being adopted by men; and that such submission, involving moral obligation, is stated to be essential to all healthy human action.—*Index to Vols. I. and II.*

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themselves together into a consistent whole the moment they are brought together. Only a sincere man could write so consistently'" (*St. George*, vol. ii. pp. 57–58). For the reference to *Modern Painters*, see Vol. IV. p. 71 *n.* (a note of 1883); for that to *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. p. 223.]

[1] [Part of this sentence—"be just, and faith in a religion which endeavours to"—was omitted, owing to a printer's error, from some of the later editions.].

[2] [But see a later letter, Vol. XXVIII. p. 156.]

me, some (now steadily enlarging) trouble, by noting that the price of these Letters to friends of mine, as supplied by me, the original inditer, to all and sundry, through my only shopman, Mr. Allen, is sevenpence per epistle,[1] and not fivepence halfpenny; and that the trade profit on the sale of them is intended to be, and must eventually be, as I intend, a quite honestly confessed profit, charged to the customer, not compressed out of the author; which object may be easily achieved by the retail bookseller, if he will resolvedly charge the symmetrical sum of Tenpence per epistle over his counter, as it is my purpose he should. But to return to Mr. Ward; the correction of my reference was sent me by one of his disciples, in a very earnest and courteous letter, written chiefly to complain that my quotation totally misrepresented Mr. Ward's opinions. I regret that it should have done so, but gave the quotation neither to represent, nor misrepresent Mr. Ward's opinions; but to show, which the sentence, though brief, quite sufficiently shows, that he had no right to have any.

19. I have before noted to you, indeed, that, in a broad sense, *nobody* has a right to have opinions; but only knowledges:[2] and, in a practical and large sense, nobody has a right even to make experiments, but only to act in a way which they certainly know will be productive of good. And this I ask you to observe again, because I begin now to receive some earnest inquiries respecting the plan I have in hand, the inquiries very naturally assuming it to be an "experiment," which may possibly be successful, and much more possibly may fail. But it is not an experiment at all. It will be merely the carrying out of what has been done already in some places, to the best of my narrow power, in other places: and so far as it can be carried, it *must* be productive of some kind of good.

[1] [Referring to the original issue of the letters: see the Bibliographical Note, above, p. xci.]

[2] [Compare Letter 6, §§ 2, 3 (pp. 99–100); also 43, § 1; 44, § 3; 71, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 107–108, 128, 732); and Letters 87, § 15, and 89, § 2 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 374, 399).]

20. For example; I have round me here at Denmark Hill seven acres of leasehold ground. I pay £50 a year ground-rent, and £250 a year in wages to my gardeners; besides expenses in fuel for hothouses, and the like. And for this sum of three hundred odd pounds a year I have some pease and strawberries in summer; some camellias and azaleas in winter; and good cream, and a quiet place to walk in, all the year round. Of the strawberries, cream, and pease, I eat more than is good for me; sometimes, of course, obliging my friends with a superfluous pottle or pint. The camellias and azaleas stand in the ante-room of my library; and everybody says, when they come in, "How pretty!" and my young lady friends have leave to gather what they like to put in their hair, when they are going to balls. Meantime, outside of my fenced seven acres—owing to the operation of the great universal law of supply and demand—numbers of people are starving; many more, dying of too much gin; and many of their children dying of too little milk; and, as I told you in my first Letter, for my own part, I won't stand this sort of thing any longer.[1]

21. Now it is evidently open to me to say to my gardeners, "I want no more azaleas or camellias; and no more strawberries and pease than are good for me. Make these seven acres everywhere as productive of good corn, vegetables, or milk, as you can; I will have no steam used upon them, for nobody on my ground shall be blown to pieces; nor any fuel wasted in making plants blossom in winter, for I believe we shall, without such unseasonable blossoms, enjoy the spring twice as much as now; but, in any part of the ground that is not good for eatable vegetables, you are to sow such wild flowers as it seems to like, and you are to keep all trim and orderly. The produce of the land, after I have had my limited and salutary

[1] [Letter 1, § 2 (p. 13). With § 20 here may be compared the introductory remarks (April 21, 1870) in Ruskin's "Notes on the Educational Series" (Vol. XXI. pp. 103–104).]

portion of pease, shall be your own; but if you sell any of it, part of the price you get for it shall be deducted from your wages."

22. Now observe, there would be no experiment whatever in any one feature of this proceeding. My gardeners might be stimulated to some extra exertion by it; but in any event I should retain exactly the same command over them that I had before. I might save something out of my £250 of wages, but I should pay no more than I do now, and in return for the gift of the produce I should certainly be able to exact compliance from my people with any such capricious fancies of mine as that they should wear velveteen jackets, or send their children to learn to sing; and, indeed, I could grind them, generally, under the iron heel of Despotism, as the ninety-two newspapers[1] would declare, to an extent unheard of before in this free country. And, assuredly, some children would get milk, strawberries, and wild flowers who do not get them now; and my young lady friends would still, I am firm in my belief, look pretty enough at their balls, even without the camellias or azaleas.

23. I am not going to do this with my seven acres here; first, because they are only leasehold; secondly, because they are too near London for wild flowers to grow brightly in. But I have bought, instead, twice as many freehold acres, where wild flowers are growing now, and shall continue to grow; and there I mean to live;[2] and, with the tenth part of my available fortune, I will buy other bits of freehold land, and employ gardeners on them in this above-stated matter. I may as well tell you at once that my tithe will be, roughly, about seven thousand pounds altogether (a little less rather than more).[3] If I get no help, I can show what I mean, even with this; but if any one cares to help me with gifts of either

[1] [See Letter 11, § 2 (p. 182).]

[2] [For Ruskin's purchase of, and removal to, Brantwood, see Vol. XXII. pp. xx. *seq.*]

[3] [See the next letter, p. 199; and Letter 48, § 23 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 224).]

money or land, they will find that what they give is applied honestly, and does a perfectly definite service: they might, for aught I know, do more good with it in other ways; but *some* good in this way—and that is all I assert —they will do, certainly, and not experimentally. And the longer they take to think of the matter the better I shall like it, for my work at Oxford is more than enough for me just now, and I shall not practically bestir myself in this land-scheme for a year to come, at least; nor then, except as a rest from my main business: but the money and land will always be safe in the hands of your trustees for you, and you need not doubt, though I show no petulant haste about the matter, that I remain

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

## LETTER 12

### THE PRINCE'S LESSON[1]

DENMARK HILL,
*23rd December*, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—You will scarcely care to read anything I have to say to you this evening—having much to think of, wholly pleasant, as I hope; and prospect of delightful days to come next week. At least, however, you will be glad to know that I have really made you the Christmas gift I promised[2]—£7000 Consols, in all, clear; a fair tithe of what I had: and to as much perpetuity as the law will allow me. It will not allow the dead to have their own way, long, whatever licence it grants the living in their humours: and this seems to me unkind to those helpless ones;—very certainly it is inexpedient for the survivors. For the wisest men are wise to the full in death; and if you would give them, instead of stately tombs, only so much honour as to do their will, when they themselves can no more contend for it, you would find it good memorial of them, such as the best of them would desire, and full of blessing to all men for all time.

English law needs mending in many respects; in none more than in this. As it stands, I can only vest my gift in trustees, desiring them, in the case of my death, immediately to appoint their own successors, and in such

[1] [See below, § 19. "The Prince's Masters" was a rejected title for this letter.]

[2] [See Letter 5, § 20, and Letter 11, § 23 (pp. 95, 197).]

continued succession, to apply the proceeds of the St. George's Fund to the purchase of land in England and Scotland, which shall be cultivated to the utmost attainable fruitfulness and beauty by the labour of man and beast thereon, such men and beasts receiving at the same time the best education attainable by the trustees for labouring creatures, according to the terms stated in this book, *Fors Clavigera.*

2. These terms, and the arrangement of the whole matter, will become clearer to you as you read on with me, and cannot be clear at all, till you do;—here is the money, at any rate, to help you, one day, to make merry with, only, if you care to give me any thanks, will you pause now for a moment from your merrymaking, to tell me,—to whom, as Fortune has ordered it, no merrymaking is possible at this time (nor, indeed, much at any time); —to me, therefore, standing as it were astonished in the midst of this gaiety of yours, will you tell—what it is all about?

Your little children would answer, doubtless, fearlessly, "Because the Child Christ was born to-day": but you, wiser than your children, it may be,—at least, it should be,—are you also sure that He was?

And if He was, what is that to you?

3. I repeat, are you indeed *sure* He was? I mean, with real happening of the strange things you have been told, that the Heavens opened near Him, showing their hosts, and that one of their stars stood still over His head? You are sure of that, you say? I am glad; and wish it were so with me; but I have been so puzzled lately by many matters that once seemed clear to me, that I seldom now feel sure of anything. Still seldomer, however, do I feel sure of the contrary of anything. That people say they saw it, may not prove that it was visible; but that I never saw it cannot prove that it was invisible: and this is a story which I more envy the people who believe on the weakest grounds, than who deny on the strongest. The

people whom I envy not at all are those who imagine they believe it, and do not.

For one of two things this story of the Nativity *is* certainly, and without any manner of doubt. It relates either a fact full of power, or a dream full of meaning. It is, at the least, not a cunningly devised fable, but the record of an impression made, by some strange spiritual cause, on the minds of the human race, at the most critical period of their existence:—an impression which has produced, in past ages, the greatest effect on mankind ever yet achieved by an intellectual conception; and which is yet to guide, by the determination of its truth or falsehood, the absolute destiny of ages to come.

4. Will you give some little time, therefore, to think of it with me to-day, being, as you tell me, sure of its truth? What, then, let me ask you, is its truth to *you?* The Child for whose birth you are rejoicing was born, you are told, to save His people from their sins;[1] but I have never noticed that you were particularly conscious of any sins to be saved from. If I were to tax you with any one in particular—lying, or thieving, or the like—my belief is you would say directly I had no business to do anything of the kind.

Nay, but, you may perhaps answer me—"That is because we *have* been saved from our sins; and we are making merry, because we are so perfectly good."

Well; there would be some reason in such an answer. There is much goodness in you to be thankful for: far more than you know, or have learned to trust. Still, I don't believe you will tell me seriously that you eat your pudding and go to your pantomimes, only to express your satisfaction that you are so very good.

5. What is, or may be, this Nativity, to you, then, I repeat? Shall we consider, a little, what, at all events, it was to the people of its time; and so make ourselves more clear as to what it might be to us? We will read slowly.

[1] [1 Timothy i. 15.]

"And there were, in that country, shepherds, staying out in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night."[1]

Watching night and day, that means; not going home. The staying out in the field is the translation of a word from which a Greek nymph has her name, Agraulos, "the stayer out in fields," of whom I shall have something to tell you soon.[2]

"And behold, the Messenger of the Lord stood above them, and the glory of the Lord lightened round them, and they feared a great fear."[3]

"Messenger." You must remember that, when this was written, the word "angel" had only the effect of our word—"messenger"—on men's minds.[4] Our translators say "angel" when they like, and "messenger" when they like; but the Bible, messenger only, or angel only, as you please.[5] For instance, "Was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the angels, and sent them forth another way?"[6]

6. Would not you fain know what this angel looked like? I have always grievously wanted, from childhood upwards, to know that; and gleaned diligently every word written by people who said they had seen angels: but none of them ever tell me what their eyes are like, or hair, or even what dress they have on. We dress them, in pictures, conjecturally, in long robes, falling gracefully; but we only continue to think that kind of dress angelic, because religious young girls, in their modesty, and wish to look only human, give their dresses flounces. When I was a child, I used to be satisfied by hearing that angels had always two

[1] [Luke ii. 8: ποιμένες ἀγραυλοῦντες.]

[2] [Not done in *Fors;* but for an earlier reference, see *Queen of the Air*, § 38 (Vol. XIX. p. 334), and, for a later, Ruskin's Preface (§ 19) to *The Economist of Xenophon*, written in 1876.]

[3] [Luke ii. 9.]

[4] Compare Letter 84, § 16 (Vol. XXIX. p. 296).]

[5] [For "angel" as "messenger," see Letter 82, § 19 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 240). For other places in which Ruskin complains of the English translators for rendering the same word by different ones, see Letter 27, § 2 (below, p. 490), and Letters 68, § 8, and 77, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 672, and Vol. XXIX. pp. 109, 110); and Ruskin's note on Psalm ix. in *Rock Honeycomb.*]

[6] [James ii. 25.]

wings, and sometimes six; but now nothing dissatisfies me so much as hearing that; for my business compels me continually into close drawing of wings; and now they never give me the notion of anything but a swift or a gannet. And, worse still, when I see a picture of an angel, I know positively where he got his wings from—not at all from any heavenly vision, but from the worshipped hawk and ibis, down through Assyrian flying bulls, and Greek flying horses, and Byzantine flying evangelists, till we get a brass eagle (of all creatures in the world, to choose!), to have the gospel of peace read from the back of it.[1]

Therefore, do the best I can, no idea of an angel is possible to me. And when I ask my religious friends, they tell me not to wish to be wise above that which is written.[2] My religious friends, let me write a few words of this letter, not to my poor puzzled workmen, but to you, who will all be going serenely to church to-morrow. This messenger, formed as we know not, stood above the shepherds, and the glory of the Lord lightened round them.

7. You would have liked to have seen it, you think! Brighter than the sun; perhaps twenty-one coloured, instead of seven-coloured, and as bright as the lime-light: doubtless you would have liked to see it, at midnight, in Judæa.

You tell me not to be wise above that which is written; why, therefore, should you be desirous, above that which is given? You cannot see the glory of God as bright as the lime-light at midnight; but you may see it as bright as the sun, at eight in the morning, if you choose. You might, at least, forty Christmases since: but not now.

8. You know I must antedate my letters for special days. I am actually writing this sentence on the second December, at ten in the morning, with the feeblest possible gleam of sun on my paper; and for the last three weeks the days have been one long drift of ragged gloom, with

[1] [Compare "The Eagle of Elis," Vol. XX. p. 398.]
[2] [See 1 Corinthians iv. 6. Compare Letter 40, § 10 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 72).]

only sometimes five minutes' gleam of the glory of God, between the gusts, which no one regarded.[1]

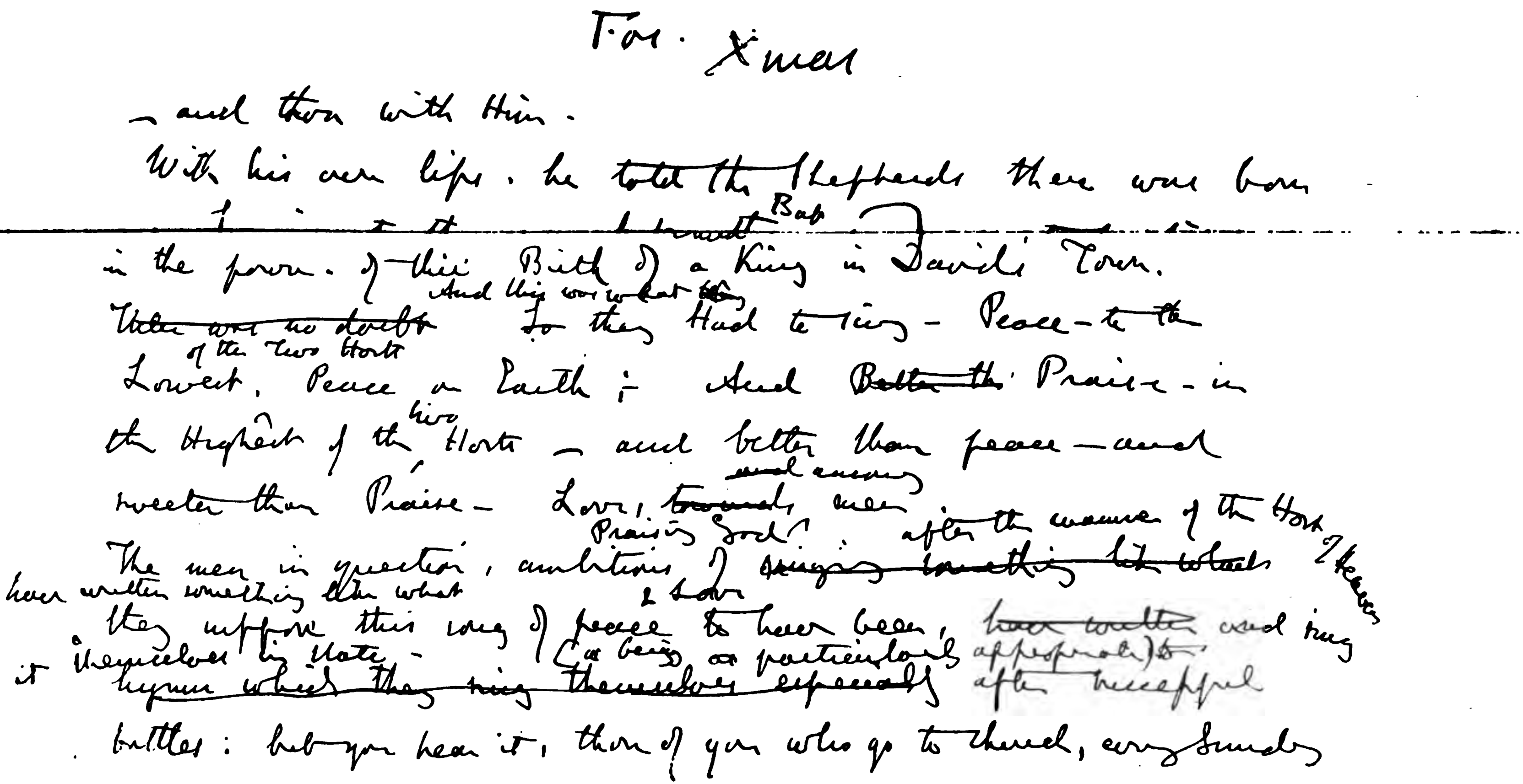
I am taking the name of God in vain, you think? No, my religious friends, not I. For completed forty years I have been striving to consider the blue heavens, the work of His fingers, and the moon and the stars, which He hath ordained:[2] but you have left me nothing now to consider here at Denmark Hill, but these black heavens, the work of your fingers, and the blotting of moon and stars, which you have ordained; you,—taking the name of God in vain every Sunday, and His work and His mercy in vain all the week through.

9. "You have nothing to do with it—you are very sorry for it—and Baron Liebig says that the power of England is coal?"[3]

You have everything to do with it. Were you not told to come out and be separate from all evil?[4] You take whatever advantage you can of the evil work and gain of this world, and yet expect the people you share with to be damned, out of your way, in the next. If you would begin by putting them out of your way here, you would perhaps carry some of them with you there. But return to your night vision, and explain to me, if not what the angel was like, at least what you understand him to have said,—he, and those with him. With his own lips he told the shepherds there was born a Saviour for them; but more was to be told: "And suddenly there was with him a multitude of the heavenly host."[5]

People generally think that this verse means only that after one angel had spoken, there came more to sing, in the manner of a chorus; but it means far another thing than that. If you look back to Genesis you find creation

[1] [Compare Letter 8, §§ 1, 2 (pp. 132–133).]
[2] [Psalms viii. 3.]
[3] [For the reference here, see *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 123 *n.* (Vol. XVIII. p. 485); and compare Letter 48, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 209).]
[4] [2 Corinthians vi. 17.]
[5] [Luke ii. 13.]



For · Xmas

— and then with Him.

With his own lips, he told the Shepherds there was born [illegible]

in the power of this Birth of a King in David's Town.

[illegible] And this was what they had to sing — Peace to the

Lowest, Peace on Earth; And Praise in

the Highest of the two Hosts — and better than peace — and

sweeter than Praise — Love, among men. Praising God! after the manner of the Host of heaven

The men in question, ambitious of [illegible]

have written something other what & [illegible]

they suppose this song of peace to have been, [illegible] and sung

it themselves in state — (as being so particularly appropriate) to

[illegible] after successful

battles: [illegible] hear it, those of you who go to church, every Sunday

A PAGE OF THE MS. OF "FORS CLAVIGERA" (Letter 12, §§ 9, 10)

pp. 204, 205

summed thus:—"So the heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them."[1] Whatever living powers of any order, great or small, were to inhabit either, are included in the word. The host of earth includes the ants and the worms of it; the host of heaven includes,—we know not what;—how should we?—the creatures that are in the stars which we cannot count,—in the space which we cannot imagine; some of them so little and so low that they can become flying pursuivants to this grain of sand we live on; others having missions, doubtless, to larger grains of sand, and wiser creatures on them.

10. But the vision of their multitude means at least this; that all the powers of the outer world which have any concern with ours became in some way visible now: having interest—they, in the praise,—as all the hosts of earth in the life, of this Child, born in David's town. And their hymn was of peace to the lowest of the two hosts—peace on earth;—and praise in the highest of the two hosts; and, better than peace, and sweeter than praise, Love, among men.[2]

The men in question, ambitious of praising God after the manner of the hosts of heaven, have written something which they suppose this Song of Peace to have been like: and sing it themselves, in state, after successful battles. But you hear it, those of you who go to church in orthodox quarters, every Sunday; and will understand the terms of it better by recollecting that the Lordship, which you begin the *Te Deum* by ascribing to God, is this, over all creatures, or over the two Hosts. In the Apocalypse it is "Lord, All governing"—Pantocrator—which we weakly translate "Almighty";[3] but the Americans still understand the original sense, and apply it so to their god, the dollar,[4] praying that the will may be done of their Father which is in Earth. Farther on in the hymn, the word "Sabaoth"

[1] [Genesis ii. 1.]
[2] [Luke ii. 14.]
[3] [Revelation iv. 8.]
[4] [For the phrase "Almighty dollar," see Vol. XVII. p. 286 *n.*]

again means all "hosts" or creatures;[1] and it is an important word for workmen to recollect, because the saying of St. James is coming true, and that fast, that the cries of the reapers whose wages have been kept back by fraud, have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth;[2] that is to say, Lord of all creatures, as much of the men at St. Catherine's Docks as of Saint Catherine herself, though they live only under Tower Hill, and she lived close under Sinai.[3]

11. You see, farther, I have written above, not "good will towards men," but "love among men." It is nearer right so; but the word is not easy to translate at all. What it means precisely, you may conjecture best from its use at Christ's baptism—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am *well-pleased*."[4] For, in precisely the same words, the angels say, there is to be "well-pleasing in men."

Now, my religious friends, I continually hear you talk of acting for God's glory, and giving God praise. Might you not, for the present, think less of praising, and more of pleasing Him? He can, perhaps, dispense with your praise; your opinions of His character, even when they come to be held by a large body of the religious press, are not of material importance to Him. He has the hosts of heaven to praise Him, who see more of His ways, it is likely, than you; but you hear that you may be pleasing to Him, if you try:—that He expected, then, to have some satisfaction in you; and might have even great satisfaction—well-pleasing, as in His own Son, if you tried. The sparrows and the robins, if you give them leave to nest as they choose about your garden, will have their own opinions about your garden; some of them will think it well laid out,—others ill. You are not solicitous about their opinions; but you like them to love each other; to build their nests

[1] [See Vol. VII. p. 206.]
[2] [James v. 4.]
[3] [St. Catherine of Alexandria; called also "of Sinai" (below, p. 482), because after her martyrdom angels carried her body to its grave on that mount: see Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, 1873, p. 45.]
[4] [Matthew iii. 17.]

without stealing each other's sticks, and to trust you to take care of them.

12. Perhaps, in like manner, if in this garden of the world you would leave off telling its Master your opinions of Him, and, much more, your quarrelling about your opinions of Him; but would simply trust Him, and mind your own business modestly, He might have more satisfaction in you than He has had yet these eighteen hundred and seventy-one years, or than He seems likely to have in the eighteen hundred and seventy-second. For first, instead of behaving like sparrows and robins, you want to behave like those birds you read the Gospel from the backs of,—eagles. Now the Lord of the garden made the claws of eagles for them, and your fingers for you; and if you would do the work of fingers, with the fingers He made, would, without doubt, have satisfaction in you. But, instead of fingers, you want to have claws—not mere short claws, at the finger-ends, as Giotto's Injustice has them;[1] but long claws that will reach leagues away; so you set to work to make yourselves manifold claws,—far-scratching;—and this smoke, which hides the sun and chokes the sky—this Egyptian darkness that may be felt[2]—manufactured by you, singular modern children of Israel, that you may have *no* light in your dwellings, is none the fairer, because cast forth by the furnaces, in which you forge your weapons of war.

A very singular children of Israel! Your Father, Abraham, indeed, once saw the smoke of a country go up as the smoke of a furnace;[3] but not with envy of the country.

Your English power is coal? Well; also the power of the Vale of Siddim was in slime,—petroleum of the best; yet the Kings of the five cities fell there;[4] and the end was no well-pleasing of God among men.

[1] [See Letter 10, § 18 (p. 178), and Plate IV.]
[2] [Exodus x. 21.]
[3] [Genesis xix. 28.]
[4] [See Genesis xiv. 9, 10. There "four kings" fought "with five," but it is only said that "the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fell there." "They that remained fled to the mountain."]

sung. They had been at first only frightened; then curious, and communicative to the bystanders: they do not think even of making any offering, which would have been a natural thought enough, as it was to the first of shepherds: but they brought no firstlings of their flock (it is only in pictures, and those chiefly painted for the sake of the picturesque, that the shepherds are seen bringing lambs, and baskets of eggs). It is not said here that they brought anything, but they looked, and talked, and went away praising God, as simple people,—yet taking nothing to heart; only the mother did that.

17. They went away:—"returned,"[1] it is said,—to their business, and never seem to have left it again. Which is strange, if you think of it. It is a good business truly, and one much to be commended, not only in itself, but as having great chances of "advancement"—as in the case of Jethro the Midianite's Jew shepherd,[2] and the herdsman of Tekoa;[3] besides the keeper of the few sheep in the wilderness, when his brethren were under arms afield.[4] But why are they not seeking for some advancement now, after opening of the heavens to them? or, at least, why not called to it afterwards, being, one would have thought, as fit for ministry under a shepherd king, as fishermen, or custom-takers?[5]

Can it be that the work is itself the best that can be done by simple men; that the shepherd, Lord Clifford,[6] or Michael of the Greenhead Ghyll,[7] are ministering better in

[1] [Luke ii. 20.]
[2] [Moses: see Exodus iii. 1.]
[3] [Amos: see Amos i. 1.]
[4] [David: see 1 Samuel xvi. 11.]
[5] [Mark i. 16, ii. 14.]
[6] [See Wordsworth's *Song, at the Feast of Brougham Castle*, "Upon the restoration of Lord Clifford, the Shepherd, to the Estates and Honours of his Ancestors." The poet tells, in a note to the song, how Henry, Lord Clifford, was "deprived of his estate and honours during the space of twenty-four years; all which time he lived as a shepherd in Yorkshire or in Cumberland. He was restored to his estate and honours in the first year of Henry the Seventh." For other references to him, see above, p. 161; Letter 38, § 18 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 44); and the letters to Mr. Woodd in Appendix 2 (Vol. XXIX. p. 533).]
[7] [See Wordsworth's *Michael, a Pastoral Poem.*]

the wilderness than any lords or commoners are likely to do in Parliament, or other apostleship; so that even the professed Fishers of Men[1] are wise in calling themselves Pastors rather than Piscators? Yet it seems not less strange that one never hears of any of these shepherds any more. The boy who made the pictures in this book for you could only fancy the Nativity, yet left his sheep,[2] that he might preach of it, in his way, all his life. But they, who saw it, went back to their sheep.

18. Some days later, another kind of persons came. On that first day, the simplest people of His own land;—twelve days after, the wisest people of other lands, far away: persons who had received, what you are all so exceedingly desirous to receive, a good education;[3] the result of which, to you,—according to Mr. John Stuart Mill, in the page of the chapter on the probable future of the labouring classes, opposite to that from which I have just quoted his opinions[4] about the Madonna's line of life—will be as follows:—

"From this increase of intelligence, several effects may be confidently anticipated. First: that they will become even less willing than at present to be led, and governed, and directed into the way they should go, by the mere authority and prestige of superiors. If they have not now, still less will they have hereafter, any deferential awe, or religious principle of obedience, holding them in mental subjection to a class above them."[5]

It is curious that, in this old story of the Nativity, the greater wisdom of these educated persons appears to have produced upon them an effect exactly contrary to that which you hear Mr. Stuart Mill would have "confidently anticipated." The uneducated people came only to see, but these highly trained ones to worship; and they have allowed themselves to be led, and governed, and directed into the way which they should go (and that a long one), by the mere authority and prestige of a superior person, whom they

[1] [Matthew iv. 19; Mark i. 17.]
[2] [For this incident in the life of Giotto, see Vol. XXIV. p. 18.]
[3] [Compare, above, pp. 39, 60–61.]
[4] [See above, § 14.]
[5] [*Principles of Political Economy*, book iv. ch. vii. § 2. For other references to the passage, see Letters 57, § 6, 60, § 2, and 69, § 15 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 405, 462, 699).]

clearly recognize as a born king, though not of their people. "Tell us, where is He that is born King of the Jews, for we have come to worship Him."[1]

19. You may perhaps, however, think that these Magi had received a different kind of education from that which Mr. Mill would recommend, or even the book which I observe is the favourite of the Chancellor of the Exchequer —*Cassell's Educator*.[2] It is possible; for they were looked on in their own country as themselves the best sort of Educators which the Cassell of their day could provide, even for Kings. And as you are so much interested in education, you will, perhaps, have patience with me while I translate for you a wise Greek's account of the education of the princes of Persia; account given three hundred years, and more, before these Magi came to Bethlehem:—

"When the boy is seven years old he has to go and learn all about horses, and is taught by the masters of horsemanship, and begins to go against wild beasts; and when he is fourteen years old, they give him the masters whom they call the Kingly Child-Guiders: and these are four, chosen the best out of all the Persians who are then in the prime of life—to wit, the most wise man they can find, and the most just, and the most temperate, and the most brave; of whom the first, the wisest, teaches the prince the magic of Zoroaster; and that magic is the service of the Gods: also, he teaches him the duties that belong to a king. Then the second, the justest, teaches him to speak truth all his life through. Then the third, the most temperate, teaches him not to be conquered by even so much as a single one of the pleasures, that he may be exercised in freedom, and verily a king, master of all things within himself, not slave to them. And the fourth, the bravest, teaches him to be dreadless of all things, as knowing that whenever he fears, he is a slave."[3]

20. Three hundred and some odd years before that carpenter, with his tired wife, asked for room in the inn, and found none,[4] these words had been written, my enlightened friends; and much longer than that, these things had

[1] [Matthew ii. 2.]

[2] [The reference is to a speech delivered by Robert Lowe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the Halifax Mechanics' Institution on December 4, 1871 (reported in the *Times*, December 6): "After suggesting that the people were not far wrong who confined their educational efforts to the three R's, and recommending for self-instruction the study of *Cassell's Educator*, revised edition of Blackstone's *Commentaries*, Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, and Arnot's *Physics*, he referred," etc., etc.]

[3] [Plato, *Alcibiades I.*, 121 E.]

[4] [Luke ii. 7.]

been done. And the three hundred and odd years (more than from Elizabeth's time till now) passed by, and much fine philosophy was talked in the interval, and many fine things found out: but it seems that when God wanted tutors for His little Prince,—at least, persons who would have been tutors to any other little prince, but could only worship this one,—He could find nothing better than those quaint-minded masters of the old Persian school. And since then, six times over, three hundred years have gone by, and we have had a good deal of theology talked in them;—not a little popular preaching administered; sundry Academies of studious persons assembled,—Paduan, Parisian, Oxonian, and the like; persons of erroneous views carefully collected and burnt; Eton, and other grammars, diligently digested; and the most exquisite and indubitable physical science obtained,—able, there is now no doubt, to extinguish gases of every sort, and explain the reasons of their smell. And here we are, at last, finding it still necessary to treat ourselves by *Cassell's Educator*,—patent filter of human faculty. Pass yourselves through that, my intelligent working friends, and see how clear you will come out on the other side.

21. Have a moment's patience yet with me, first, while I note for you one or two of the ways of that older tutorship. Four masters, you see, there were for the Persian Prince. One had no other business than to teach him to speak truth; so difficult a matter the Persians thought it. *We* know better,—we. You heard how perfectly the French gazettes did it last year, without any tutor, by their Holy Republican instincts. Then the second tutor had to teach the Prince to be free. That tutor both the French and you have had for some time back; but the Persian and Parisian dialects are not similar in their use of the word "freedom"; of that hereafter.[1] Then another master has to teach the Prince to fear nothing; him, I admit, you want little teaching from, for your modern Republicans fear

[1] [A discussion promised again in Letter 15 (below, p. 266 *n.*). See Letter 43 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 113 *seq.*) for French "franchise."]

even the devil little, and God, less; but may I observe that you are occasionally still afraid of thieves, though as I said some time since, I never can make out what you have got to be stolen.[1]

For instance, much as we suppose ourselves desirous of beholding this Bethlehem Nativity, or getting any idea of it, I know an English gentleman who was offered the other day a picture of it, by a good master,—Raphael,—for five-and-twenty pounds; and said it was too dear:[2] yet had paid, only a day or two before, five hundred pounds for a pocket-pistol that shot people out of both ends, so afraid of thieves was he.*

22. None of these three masters, however, the masters of justice, temperance, or fortitude, were sent to the little Prince at Bethlehem. Young as He was, He had already been in some practice of these; but there was yet the fourth cardinal virtue, of which, so far as we can understand, He had to learn a new manner for His new reign: and the masters of that were sent to Him—the masters of Obedience. For He had to become obedient unto Death.[3]

And the most wise—says the Greek—the most wise master of all, teaches the boy magic; and this magic is the service of the gods.

23. My skilled working friends, I have heard much of your magic lately. Sleight of hand, and better than that (you say) sleight of machine. Léger-de-main, improved into léger-de-mécanique. From the West, as from the East, now, your American and Arabian magicians attend you; vociferously crying their new lamps for the old stable

* The papers had it that several gentlemen concurred in this piece of business; but they put the Nativity at five-and-twenty thousand, and the Agincourt, or whatever the explosive protector was called, at five hundred thousand.

[1] [See Letter 2 (above, pp. 36, 43).]

[2] [The "Madonna di Sant' Antonio," now the property of Mr. Pierpont Morgan, and deposited on loan in the National Gallery (1906): for further particulars of the British Government's refusal to buy the picture, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 24 *n.* (Vol. XXII. p. 140).]

[3] [Philippians ii. 8.]

lantern of scapegoat's horn.[1] And for the oil of the trees of Gethsemane, your American friends have struck oil more finely inflammable. Let Aaron look to it, how he lets any run down his beard;[2] and the wise virgins trim their wicks cautiously,[3] and Madeleine la Pétroleuse, with her improved spikenard, take good heed how she breaks her alabaster,[4] and completes the worship of her Christ.

24. Christmas, the mass of the Lord's anointed;—you will hear of devices enough to make it merry to you this year, I doubt not. The increase in the quantity of disposable malt liquor and tobacco is one great fact, better than all devices. Mr. Lowe has, indeed, says the *Times* of June 5th,

"done the country good service, by placing before it, in a compendious form, the statistics of its own prosperity.[5] . . . The twenty-two millions of people of 1825 drank barely nine millions of barrels of beer in the twelve months: our thirty-two millions now living drink all but twenty-six millions of barrels. The consumption of spirits has increased also, though in nothing like the same proportion; but whereas sixteen million pounds of tobacco sufficed for us in 1825, as many as forty-one million pounds are wanted now. By every kind of measure, therefore, and on every principle of calculation, the growth of our prosperity is established." *

25. Beer, spirits, and tobacco, are thus more than ever at your command; and magic besides, of lantern, and harlequin's wand; nay, necromancy if you will, the Witch of Endor[6] at number so and so round the corner, and raising of the dead, if you roll away the tables from off them. But of this one sort of magic, this magic of Zoroaster,

* This last clause does not, you are however to observe, refer in the great Temporal Mind, merely to the merciful Dispensation of beer and tobacco, but to the general state of things, afterwards thus summed with exultation: "We doubt if there is a household in the kingdom which would now be contented with the conditions of living cheerfully accepted in 1825."

[1] [For other references to the "History of Aladdin; or, The Wonderful Lamp," see Letter 71, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 736), and General Index.]
[2] [Psalms cxxxiii. 2.]
[3] [Matthew xxv.]
[4] [Mark xiv. 3.]
[5] [For later references to this passage, see Letters 50, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 263); 73, § 6, and 86, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 17, 340).]
[6] [See 1 Samuel xxviii. Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 228 (Vol. XXIII. p. 133.]

which is the service of God, you are not likely to hear. In one sense, indeed, you have heard enough of becoming God's servants; to wit, servants dressed in His court livery, to stand behind His chariot, with gold-headed sticks. Plenty of people will advise you to apply to Him for that sort of position: and many will urge you to assist Him in carrying out His intentions, and be what the Americans call helps, instead of servants.

Well! that may be, some day, truly enough; but before you can be allowed to help Him, you must be quite sure that you can *see* Him. It is a question now, whether you can even see any creature of His—or the least thing that He has made,—see it,—so as to ascribe due worth, or worship to it,—how much less to its Maker?

26. You have felt, doubtless, at least those of you who have been brought up in any habit of reverence, that every time when in this letter I have used an American expression, or aught like one,[1] there came upon you a sense of sudden wrong—the darting through you of acute cold. I meant you to feel that: for it is the essential function of America to make us all feel that. It is the new skill they have found there;—this skill of degradation; others they have, which other nations had before them, from whom they have learned all they know, and among whom they must travel, still, to see any human work worth seeing. But this is their speciality, this their one gift to their race, to show men how *not* to worship,—how never to be ashamed in the presence of anything. But the magic of Zoroaster is the exact reverse of this, to find out the worth of all things and do them reverence.

27. Therefore, the Magi bring treasures, as being discerners of treasures, knowing what is intrinsically worthy, and worthless; what is best in brightness, best in sweetness, best in bitterness—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Finders of treasure hid in fields, and goodliness in strange

[1] [See "helps" (above, § 25); "almighty dollar," p. 205; and "struck oil," p. 215.]

pearls,[1] such as produce no effect whatever on the public mind, bent passionately on its own fashion of pearl-diving at Gennesaret.

And you will find that the essence of the mis-teaching, of your day, concerning wealth of any kind, is in this denial of intrinsic value.[2] What anything is worth, or not worth, it cannot tell you: all that it can tell is the exchange value. What Judas, in the present state of Demand and Supply, can get for the article he has to sell, in a given market, that is the value of his article:—Yet you do not find that Judas had joy of his bargain. No Christmas, still less Easter, holidays, coming to him with merrymaking. Whereas, the Zoroastrians, who "take stars for money,"[3] rejoice with exceeding great joy at seeing something, which —they cannot put in their pockets. For, "the vital principle of their religion is the recognition of one supreme power; the God of Light—in every sense of the word—the Spirit who creates the world, and rules it, and defends it against the power of evil."*

28. I repeat to you, now, the question I put at the beginning of my letter. What is this Christmas to you? What Light is there, for your eyes, also, pausing yet over the place where the Child lay?[4]

I will tell you, briefly, what Light there should be;—what lessons and promise are in this story, at the least. There may be infinitely more than I know; but there is certainly, this.

The Child is born to bring you the promise of new life. Eternal or not, is no matter; pure and redeemed, at least.

* MAX MÜLLER: "Genesis and the Zend-Avesta."[5]

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[1] [Matthew ii. 11, xiii. 44, 45.]

[2] [Compare Vol. XVII. p. lxxxvi.]

[3] [George Herbert, *The Temple* ("Church Porch," stanza 29); quoted also below, p. 419, and in Letter 75, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 60).]

[4] [See Matthew ii. 9.]

[5] [A chapter so entitled in Max Müller's *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. i. (1867): see p. 154 for Ruskin's quotation.]

He is born twice on your earth; first, from the womb, to the life of toil; then, from the grave, to that of rest.

To His first life He is born in a cattle-shed, the supposed son of a carpenter; and afterwards brought up to a carpenter's craft.

29. But the circumstances of His second life are, in great part, hidden from us: only note this much of it. The three principal appearances to His disciples are accompanied by giving or receiving of food. He is known at Emmaus in breaking of bread; at Jerusalem He Himself eats fish and honey to show that He is not a spirit; and His charge to Peter is "when they had dined," the food having been obtained under His direction.[1]

But in His first showing Himself to the person who loved Him best, and to whom He had forgiven most,[2] there is a circumstance more singular and significant still. Observe —assuming the accepted belief to be true,—this was the first time when the Maker of men showed Himself to human eyes, risen from the dead, to assure them of immortality. You might have thought He would have shown Himself in some brightly glorified form,—in some sacred and before unimaginable beauty.

He shows Himself in so simple aspect, and dress, that she, who, of all people on the earth, should have known Him best, glancing quickly back through her tears, does not know Him. Takes Him for "the gardener."[3]

30. Now, unless absolute orders had been given to us, such as would have rendered error impossible (which would have altered the entire temper of Christian probation), could we possibly have had more distinct indication of the purpose of the Master—borne first by witness of shepherds, in a cattle-shed, then by witness of the person for whom He had done most, and who loved Him best, in the garden, and in gardener's guise, and not known

[1] [Luke xxiv. 30–43; John xxi. 15.]
[2] [Luke vii. 47; Matthew xxviii. 1.]
[3] [John xx. 15.]

even by His familiar friends till He gave them bread—could it be told us, I repeat, more definitely by any sign or indication whatsoever, that the noblest human life was appointed to be by the cattle-fold and in the garden; and to be known as noble in breaking of bread?[1]

31. Now, but a few words more. You will constantly hear foolish and ignoble persons conceitedly proclaiming the text, that "not many wise and not many noble are called."[2]

Nevertheless, of those who are truly wise, and truly noble, all are called that exist. And to sight of this Nativity, you find that, together with the simple persons, near at hand, there were called precisely the wisest men that could be found on earth at that moment.

And these men, for their own part, came—I beg you very earnestly again to note this—not to see, nor talk—but to do reverence. They are neither curious nor talkative, but submissive.

And, so far as they came to teach, they came as teachers of one virtue only: Obedience. For of this Child, at once Prince and Servant, Shepherd and Lamb, it was written: "See, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. He shall not strive, nor cry, till he shall bring forth Judgment unto Victory."[3]

32. My friends, of the black country, you may have wondered at my telling you so often,[4]—I tell you nevertheless, once more, in bidding you farewell this year,—that one main purpose of the education I want you to seek is, that you may see the sky, with the stars of it again; and be enabled, in their material light—"riveder le stelle."[5]

But, much more, out of this blackness of the smoke of the Pit, the blindness of heart, in which the children of

[1] [See Mark xiv. 22; Luke xxiv. 30.]
[2] [1 Corinthians i. 26.]
[3] [Isaiah xlii. 1–3, and Matthew xii. 20.]
[4] [See, for instance, p. 164.]
[5] [Dante's *Inferno*, xxxiv., last line.]

*Dis*obedience blaspheme God and each other, heaven grant to you the vision of that sacred light, at pause over the place where the young Child was laid; and ordain that more and more in each coming Christmas it may be said of you, "When they saw the Star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy."[1]

Believe me your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] [Matthew ii. 10.]

# FORS CLAVIGERA.

## LETTERS

*TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS OF GREAT BRITAIN.*

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

VOL. II.

GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1872.

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# FORS CLAVIGERA

## LETTER 18

### EVERY MAN HIS DUE[1]

*1st January*, 1872.

1. My Friends,—I would wish you a happy New Year, if I thought my wishes likely to be of the least use. Perhaps, indeed, if your cap of liberty were what you always take it for, a wishing cap, I might borrow it of you, for once; and be so much cheered by the chime of its bells, as to wish you a happy New Year, whether you deserved one or not: which would be the worst thing I could possibly bring to pass for you. But wishing cap, belled or silent, you can lend me none; and my wishes having proved, for the most part, vain for myself, except in making me wretched till I got rid of them, I will not present you with anything which I have found to be of so little worth. But if you trust more to any one else's than mine, let me advise your requesting them to wish that you may deserve a happy New Year, whether you get one or not.

2. To some extent, indeed, that way, you are sure to get it: and it will much help you towards the seeing such way if you would make it a practice in your talk always to say you "deserve" things, instead of that you "have a right" to them. Say that you "deserve" a vote, —"deserve" so much a day, instead of that you have "a

[1] ["Of Republics" was a discarded title for this letter, Ruskin adding a reference to the words "Republics at once holy and enlightened" in § 13.]

right to" a vote, etc. The expression is both more accurate and more general; for if it chanced, which heaven forbid, —but it might be,—that you deserved a whipping, you would never think of expressing that fact by saying you "had a right to" a whipping; and if you deserve anything better than that, why conceal your deserving under the neutral term, "rights"; as if you never meant to claim more than might be claimed also by entirely nugatory and worthless persons? Besides, such accurate use of language will lead you sometimes into reflection on the fact, that what you deserve, it is not only well for you to get, but certain that you ultimately *will* get; and neither less nor more.

8. Ever since Carlyle wrote that sentence about rights and mights, in his *French Revolution*,[1] all blockheads of a benevolent class have been declaiming against him, as a worshipper of force. What else, in the name of the three Magi, *is* to be worshipped? Force of brains, Force of heart, Force of hand;—will you dethrone these, and worship apoplexy?—despise the spirit of Heaven, and worship phthisis? Every condition of idolatry is summed in the one broad wickedness of refusing to worship Force, and resolving to worship No-Force;—denying the Almighty, and bowing down to four-and-twopence with a stamp on it.[2]

But Carlyle never meant in that place to refer you to such final truth. He meant but to tell you that before you dispute about what you should get, you would do well to find out first what is to be gotten. Which briefly is, for everybody, at last, their deserts, and no more.

4. I did not choose, in beginning this book a year since, to tell you what I meant it to become. This, for one of several things, I mean,—that it shall put before you so much of the past history of the world, in an intelligible manner, as may enable you to see the laws of Fortune

[1] [Really in *Chartism* (1839), ch. v. ("Rights and Mights"), where there is some discussion of the French Revolution.]

[2] [For the "Almighty dollar," see Letter 12, § 10 (p. 205).]

or Destiny, "Clavigera," Nail bearing;[1] or, in the full idea, nail-and-hammer bearing; driving the iron home with hammer-stroke, so that nothing shall be moved; and fastening each of us at last to the Cross we have chosen to carry. Nor do I doubt being able to show you that this irresistible power is also just; appointing measured return for every act and thought, such as men deserve.

And that being so, foolish moral writers will tell you that whenever you do wrong you will be punished, and whenever you do right rewarded: which is true, but only half the truth. And foolish immoral writers will tell you that if you do right, you will get no good; and if you do wrong dexterously, no harm. Which, in their sense of good and harm, is true also, but, even in that sense, only half the truth. The joined and four-square truth is, that every right is exactly rewarded, and every wrong exactly punished; but that, in the midst of this subtle, and, to our impatience, slow, retribution, there is a startlingly separate or counter ordinance of good and evil,—one to this man, and the other to that,—one at this hour of our lives, and the other at that,—ordinance which is entirely beyond our control; and of which the providential law, hitherto, defies investigation.

5. To take an example near at hand, which I can answer for. Throughout the year which ended this morning, I have been endeavouring, more than hitherto in any equal period, to act for others more than for myself: and looking back on the twelve months, am satisfied that in some measure I have done right. So far as I am sure of that, I see also, even already, definitely proportioned fruit, and clear results following from that course;—consequences simply in accordance with the unfailing and undeceivable Law of Nature.

[1] [For meanings of *Fors Clavigera*, see Letter 2, § 2 (p. 28); and on the further meaning here dwelt upon, compare Letters 22, § 6 (p. 375), 60, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 463), 73, § 2, and 81, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 14, 199). On the subject of the title generally, see the Introduction (above, pp. xix. *seq.*).]

That it has chanced to me, in the course of the same year, to have to sustain the most acute mental pain yet inflicted on my life; to pass through the most nearly mortal illness;—and to write your Christmas letter beside my mother's dead body,[1] are appointments merely of the hidden Fors, or Destiny, whose power I mean to trace for you in past history,[2] being hitherto, in the reasons of it, indecipherable, yet palpably following certain laws of storm, which are in the last degree wonderful and majestic.

6. Setting this Destiny, over which you have no control whatsoever, for the time, out of your thoughts, there remains the symmetrical destiny, over which you have control absolute—namely, that you are ultimately to get—exactly what you are worth.

And your control over this destiny consists, therefore, simply in *being* worth more or less, and not at all in voting that you are worth more or less. Nay, though you should leave voting, and come to fighting, which I see is next proposed,[3] you will not, even that way, arrive any nearer to your object—admitting that you *have* an object, which is much to be doubted. I hear, indeed, that you mean to fight for a Republic, in consequence of having been informed by Mr. John Stuart Mill, and others, that a number of utilities are embodied in that object.[4] We will inquire into the nature of this object presently, going over the ground of my last January's letter[5] again; but first, may I suggest to you that it would be more prudent, instead of fighting to make us all republicans against our will,—to make the most of the republicans you have got? There are many, you tell me, in England,—more in France, a sprinkling in Italy,—and nobody else in the United

[1] [For his acute mental pain, see Vol. XXII. p. xx.; for his illness at Matlock, *ibid.*, p. xviii.; for his mother's death, *ibid.*, p. xxiii.]

[2] [See, for instance, pp. 384 *n.*, 387, 564.]

[3] [An allusion, presumably, to occasional harangues in the Republican agitation of the time, and to vaguely violent articles in the *Republican*.]

[4] [For this phrase, see Letter 4, §§ 5, 6 (pp. 64–66). For Mill's views on "The Ideally best Polity," see ch. iii. of his *Representative Government*.]

[5] [Letter 1.]

States. What should you fight for, being already in such prevalence? Fighting is unpleasant, nowadays, however glorious, what with mitrailleuses, torpedoes, and mismanaged commissariat. And what, I repeat, should you fight for? All the fighting in the world cannot make us Tories change our old opinions, any more than it will make you change your new ones. It cannot make us leave off calling each other names if we like—Lord this, and the Duke of that, whether you republicans like it or not. After a great deal of trouble on both sides, it might, indeed, end in abolishing our property; but without any trouble on either side, why cannot your friends begin by abolishing their own? Or even abolishing a tithe of their own? Ask them to do merely as much as I, an objectionable old Tory, have done for you. Make them send you in an account of their little properties, and strike you off a tenth, for what purposes you see good; and for the remaining nine-tenths, you will find clue to what should be done in the *Republican* of last December,[1] wherein Mr. W. Riddle, C.E., "fearlessly states" that all property must be taken under control;[2] which is, indeed, precisely what Mr. Carlyle has been telling you these last thirty years, only he seems to have been under an impression, which I certainly shared with him, that you republicans objected to control of any description. Whereas if you let anybody put your property under control, you will find practically he has a good deal of hold upon *you*, also.

7. You are not all agreed upon that point perhaps? But you are all agreed that you want a Republic. Though England is a rich country, having worked herself literally black in the face to become so, she finds she cannot afford to keep a Queen any longer;[3]—is doubtful even whether

[1] [The *Republican:* an Advocate and Record of Republican and Democratic Principles and Movements, No. 24. With No. 26 the periodical came to an end.]

[2] [See Letter 14, § 2 (below, p. 245).]

[3] [The reference is to the agitation in which Sir Charles Dilke ("Citizen Dilke," as the comic papers called him) was engaged during the winter of 1871 against the expenses of royalty.]

she would not get on better Queenless; and I see with consternation that even one of my own personal friends, Mr. Auberon Herbert, rising the other day at Nottingham,[1] in the midst of great cheering, declares that, though he is not in favour of any immediate change, yet, "if we asked ourselves what form of government was the most reasonable, the most in harmony with ideas of self-government and self-responsibility, and what Government was most likely to save us from unnecessary divisions of party, and to weld us into one compact mass, he had no hesitation in saying the weight of argument was in favour of a Republic."*

8. Well, suppose we *were* all welded into a compact mass. Might it not still be questionable what sort of a mass we were? After any quantity of puddling, iron is still nothing better than iron;—in any rarity of dispersion, gold-dust is still gold. Mr. Auberon Herbert thinks it desirable that you should be stuck together. Be it so; but what is there to stick? At this time of year,[2] doubtless, some of your children, interested generally in production of puddings, delight themselves, to your great annoyance, with idealization of pudding in the gutter; and enclose, between unctuous tops and bottoms, imaginary mince. But none of them, I suppose, deliberately come in to their mothers, at cooking time, with materials for a treat on Republican principles. Mud for suet—gravel for plums—droppings of what heaven may send, for flavour;—"Please, mother, a towel, to knot it tight—(or, to use Mr. Herbert's expression, "weld it into a compact mass")—Now for the old saucepan, mother;—and you just lay the cloth!"[3]

* See *Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 5th, 1871.

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[1] [On December 4, 1871, Mr. Charles Seely and Mr. Auberon Herbert (1838–1906), Liberal members for Nottingham, addressed their constituents. Mr. Seely made a moderate speech, and "resumed his seat amid groans and cheers." Mr. Auberon Herbert, rising amid great cheering and cries of cheers for "Taylor, Dilke, and Fawcett," defended the agitation in favour of a Republic.]

[2] [Ruskin was writing at Christmas time.]

[3] [For a reference to §§ 7, 8, and a statement of the proposition which they were meant to illustrate, see Letter 67, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 651); and compare, above, p. 17.]

9. My friends, I quoted to you last year the foolishest thing, yet said, according to extant history, by lips of mankind—namely, that the cause of starvation is quantity of meat.* But one can yet see what the course of foolish thought was which achieved that saying: whereas, though it is not absurd to quite the same extent to believe that a nation depends for happiness and virtue on the form of its government, it is more difficult to understand how so large a number of otherwise rational persons have been beguiled into thinking so. The stuff of which the nation is made is developed by the effort and the fate of ages: according to that material, such and such government becomes possible to it, or impossible. What other form of government you try upon it than the one it is fit for, necessarily comes to nothing; and a nation wholly worthless is capable of none.

10. Notice, therefore, carefully Mr. Herbert's expression "welded into a compact mass." The phrase would be likely enough to occur to any one's mind, in a midland district; and meant, perhaps, no more than if the speaker had said "melted," or "blended" into a mass. But whether Mr. Herbert meant more or not, his words meant more. You may melt glass or glue into a mass, but you can only weld, or wield, metal. And are you sure that, if you would have a Republic, you are capable of being welded into one? Granted that you are no better than iron, are you as good? Have you the toughness in you? and can you bear the hammering? Or, would your fusion together —your literal con-fusion,—be as of glass only, blown thin with nitrogen, and shattered before it got cold?

Welded Republics there indeed have been, ere now, but they ask first for bronze, then for a hammerer, and, mainly, for patience on the anvil. Have you any of the three at command,—patience, above all things, the most

* Letter 4, § 11 [p. 75]. Compare Letter 5, § 3 [p. 80]; and observe, in future references of this kind I shall merely say, 4, § 11; 5, § 3, etc.[1]

[1] [In the original editions the references were to the Letters and *Pages*; they are now to the Letters and *Sections*.]

pass on the purest republican principles; every man's opinion being held as good as his neighbour's; and no superstitious belief whatsoever interfering with the wisdom of popular decision, or the liberty of popular action. The republicanism shall also be that of this enlightened nineteenth century: in other respects the circumstances are similar; for the event takes place during an expedition of British—not subjects, indeed, but quite unsubjected persons,—acknowledging neither Queen nor Admiral,—in search, nevertheless, of gold and silver, in America, like Sir Francis himself. And to make all more precisely illustrative, I am able to take the account of the matter from the very paper which contained Mr. Auberon Herbert's speech,[1] the *Pall Mall Gazette* of 5th December last.

16. In another column, a little before the addresses of the members for Nottingham, you will therein find, quoted from the *New York Tribune*, the following account of some executions which took place at "the Angels" (Los Angeles), California, on the 24th October:—

"The victims were some unoffending Chinamen, the executioners were some 'warm-hearted and impulsive' Irishmen, assisted by some Mexicans. It seems that owing to an impression that the houses inhabited by the Chinamen were filled with gold, a mob collected in front of a store belonging to one of them named Yo Hing with the object of plundering it. The Chinamen barricaded the building, shots were fired, and an American was killed. Then commenced the work of pillage and murder. The mob forced an entrance, four Chinamen were shot dead, seven or eight were wounded, and seventeen were taken and hanged. The following description of the hanging of the first victim will show how the executions were conducted:—

"'Weng Chin, a merchant, was the first victim of hanging. He was led through the streets by two lusty Irishmen, who were cheered on by a crowd of men and boys, most of Irish and Mexican birth. Several times the unfortunate Chinaman faltered or attempted to extricate himself from the two brutes who were leading him, when a half-drunken Mexican in his immediate rear would plunge the point of a large dirk knife into his back. This, of course, accelerated his speed, but never a syllable fell from his mouth. Arriving at the eastern gate of Tomlinson's old lumber yard, just out of Temple Street, hasty preparations for launching the inoffensive man into eternity were followed by his being pulled up to the beam with a rope round his neck. He didn't seem to 'hang right,' and one of the

[1] [See above, § 7.]

Irishmen got upon his shoulders and jumped upon them, breaking his collar-bone. What with shots, stabs, and strangulation, and other modes of civilized torture, the victim was 'hitched up' for dead, and the crowd gave vent to their savage delight in demoniac yells and a jargon which too plainly denoted their Hibernian nationality.'

"One victim, a Chinese physician of some celebrity, Dr. Gnee Sing, offered his tormentors 4000 dollars in gold to let him go. His pockets were immediately cut and ransacked, a pistol-shot mutilated one side of his face 'dreadfully,' and he too was 'stretched up' with cheers. Another wretched man was jerked up with great force against the beam, and the operation repeated until his head was broken in a way we cannot describe. Three Chinese, one a youth of about fifteen years old, picked up at random, and innocent of even a knowledge of the disturbance, were hanged in the same brutal manner. Hardly a word escaped them, but the younger one said, as the rope was being placed round his neck, 'Me no 'fraid to die; me velly good China boy; me no hurt no man.' Three Chinese boys who were hanged 'on the side of a waggon' struggled hard for their lives. One managed to lay hold of the rope, upon which two Irishmen beat his hands with clubs and pistols till he released his hold and fell into a 'hanging position.' The Irishmen then blazed away at him with bullets, and so put an end to his existence."

17. My republican friends,—or otherwise than friends, as you choose to have it—you will say, I presume, that this comparison of methods of magistracy is partial and unfair? It is so. All comparisons—as all experiments—are unfair till you have made more. More you shall make with me; and as many as you like, on your own side. I will tell you, in due time, some tales of Tory gentlemen who lived, and would scarcely let anybody else live, at Padua and Milan, which will do your hearts good.[1] Meantime, meditate a little over these two instances of capital justice, as done severally by monarchists and republicans in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries; and meditate, not a little, on the capital justice which you have lately accomplished yourselves in France. You have had it all your own way there, since Sedan. No Emperor to paralyze your hands any more, or impede the flow of your conversation. Anything, since that fortunate hour, to be done,—anything to be said, that you liked; and in the midst of you, found by sudden good fortune, two quiet, honest, and brave men;

[1] [For instance, Ezzelino da Romano, Lord of Padua: see below, p. 249.]

one old and one young, ready to serve you with all their strength, and evidently of supreme gifts in the way of service,—Generals Trochu and Rossel.[1] You have exiled one, shot the other;* and, but that, as I told you,[2] my wishes are of no account that I know of, I should wish you joy of your "situation."

Believe me, faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

* "You did not shoot him"? No; my expression was hasty; you only stood by, in a social manner, to see him shot;—how many of you?—and so finely organized as you say you are!

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[1] [General Louis Jules Trochu (1815–1896) was Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Paris, and at the revolution of September 4 became President of the Government of National Defence. When the capitulation of Paris became inevitable he resigned the Governorship (January 22, 1871). He was not, however, exiled, nor did he retire from political life till July 1872.

General Louis Nathaniel Rossel was instrumental in discovering Bazaine's treachery at Metz; placed his services at the disposal of the Commune; disheartened by the anarchy and ineptitude, resigned; arrested by the Versailles troops, and shot on November 28, 1871. He was twenty-seven years of age. There was an appreciation of him by Mazzini in the *Contemporary Review* for May 1872 (vol. 9, pp. 812–823: "The individuality of Rossel, with that of a very few others, stands out in strong relief from the crowd of professional demagogues, and rebels actuated by jealousy or rage, by whom the Parisian movement was perverted and doomed beforehand to destruction. . . . The great French Revolution and Napoleon would have perceived in him the stuff of a Hoche, Marceau, or Desaix."]

[2] [See above, p. 229.]

# LETTER 14

## ON THE DORDOGNE[1]

DENMARK HILL,
*1st February*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—In going steadily over our ground again, roughly broken last year, you see that, after endeavouring, as I did last month, to make you see somewhat more clearly the absurdity of fighting for a Holy Republic[2] before you are sure of having got so much as a single saint to make it of,[3] I have now to illustrate further the admission made in § 5 of my first Letter [p. 16], that even the most courteous and perfect Monarchy cannot make an unsaintly life into a saintly one, nor constitute thieving, for instance, an absolutely praiseworthy profession, however glorious or delightful. It is indeed more difficult to show this in the course of past history than any other moral truth whatsoever. For, without doubt or exception, thieving has not only hitherto been the most respected of professions, but the most healthy, cheerful, and in the practical outcome of it, though not in theory, even the honestest, followed by men.[4] Putting the higher traditional and romantic ideals, such as that of our Robin Hood, and the Scottish Red Robin,[5] for the time, aside, and keeping to meagre historical facts, could any of you help giving your heartiest sympathy to Master Francis Drake, setting out in his little *Paschal Lamb*[6] to seek his fortune on the Spanish seas, and coming home, on that happy Sunday morning, to the

[1] [See below, § 8. "Dissimilar Rectangles" (see below, § 3) was a rejected title for this Letter. There is a MS. note in the author's copy, in which Ruskin also summarised the contents of the letter as "Marmontel and my own books."]

[2] [For this reference to Garibaldi, see above, pp. 16, 117.]

[3] [See Letter 13, § 10 (p. 235).]

[4] [Compare Letters 7, § 13; 22, § 20; and 31, § 15 (pp. 127, 385, 577).]

[5] [Rob Roy.]

[6] [Or rather *Passover:* see above, p. 237.]

unspeakable delight of the Cornish congregation?[1] Would you like to efface the stories of Edward III., and his lion's whelp, from English history; and do you wish that instead of pillaging the northern half of France, as you read of them in the passages quoted in my fourth Letter, and fighting the Battle of Crécy to get home again, they had stayed at home all the time; and practised, shall we say, upon the flute, as I find my moral friends think Frederick of Prussia should have done?[2] Or would you have chosen that your Prince Harry should never have played that set with his French tennis-balls,[3] which won him Harfleur, and Rouen, and Orleans, and other such counters, which we might have kept, to this day perhaps, in our pockets, but for the wood maid of Domrémy?[4] Are you ready, even now, in the height of your morality, to give back India to the Brahmins and their cows, and Australia to her aborigines and their apes? You are ready? Well, my Christian friends, it does one's heart good to hear it, providing only you are quite sure you know what you are about. "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labour."[5] You are verily willing to accept that alternative? I inquire anxiously, because I see that your Under Secretary of State for India, Mr. Grant Duff, proposes to you, in his speech at Elgin,[6] not at all as the first object of your lives to be honest;

[1] [See Letter 13, § 12 (p. 238); and compare "Candida Casa," § 19 (in a later volume of this edition).]

[2] [The reference is probably to a discussion with Professor Norton on the character of Frederick: see (in a later volume of this edition) Ruskin's letters of August 26, 1870, and December 9, 1871. For Frederick the Great's proficiency in the flute, see Carlyle's *Friedrich*, book x. ch. i. (vol. ii. p. 375, 1869 edition), and *Memoirs of* (his sister) *Wilhelmina, Margravine of Baireuth*, by Edith E. Cuthell, 1905, vol. i. pp. 69–70, vol. ii. p. 66.]

[3] [See *King Henry V.*, Act i. sc. 2: compare (in later volumes of this edition) *Elements of Prosody*, § 41, and *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 65.]

[4] [Compare Letter 8, § 6 (above, p. 138); and *Sesame and Lilies*, § 82 (Vol. XVIII. p. 133).]

[5] [Ephesians iv. 28.]

[6] [Speech to his constituents, reported in the *Times* of December 21, 1871. The Liberal Party, he said, must "accept the legacy left by the late Mr. Cobden." We must increase our riches, and, in regard to foreign affairs, must adopt a policy of non-intervention, and become "supremely well-informed." "I rack my brain," he said, "without success to think of any probable combination of European events in which the assistance of an English force, even if that force consisted of men each worth two of any other army, would be half so useful to our allies as money." See Ruskin's citation of this passage in § 5.]

but, as the first, to be rich, and the second to be intelligent: now when you have all become rich and intelligent, how do you mean to live? Mr. Grant Duff, of course, means by being rich that you are each to have two powdered footmen; but then who are to be the footmen, now that we mustn't have blacks?[1] And granting you all the intelligence in the world on the most important subjects,—the spots in the sun, or the nodes of the moon, as aforesaid,[2]—will that help you to get your dinner, unless you steal it in the old fashion?

2. The subject is indeed discussed with closer definition than by Mr. Grant Duff, by Mr. William Riddle, C.E., the authority I quoted to you for taking property "under control."[3] You had better perhaps be put in complete possession of his views, as stated by himself in the *Republican* of December last; the rather, as that periodical has not had, according to Mr. Riddle, hitherto a world-wide circulation:—

"THE SIMPLE AND ONLY REMEDY FOR THE WANTS OF NATIONS."

"It is with great grief that I hear that your periodical finds but a limited sale. I ask you to insert a few words from me, which may strike some of your readers as being important. These are *all in all*. What all nations want, Sir, are, 1, Shelter; 2, Food; 3, Clothes; 4, Warmth; 5, Cleanliness; 6, Health; 7, Love; 8, Beauty. These are only to be got in one way. I will state it. 1.—An International Congress must make a number of steam engines, or use those now made, and taking all property under its control (I fearlesaly state it) must roll off iron and glass for buildings to shelter hundreds of millions of people. 2.—Must, by such engines, make steam apparatus to plough immense plains of wheat, where steam has elbow-room, abroad; must make engines to grind it on an enormous scale, first fetching it in flat-bottomed ships, made of simple form, larger than the *Great Eastern*, and of simple form of plates, machine fastened; must bake it by machine ovens commensurate. 3.—Machine looms must work unattended night and day, rolling off textile yarns and fabrics, and machines must make clothes, just as envelopes are knocked off. 4.—Machinery must do laundress work, ironing and mangling; and, in a word, our labour must give place to machinery, laid down in gigantic factories on common-sense principles by an International leverage. This is the education you must inculcate. Then man will be at last emancipated. All else is utter bosh, and I will prove it so when and wherever I can get the means to lecture.

"WM. RIDDLE, C.E.

"SOUTH LAMBETH, *Nov.* 2."

[1] [Compare, above, p. 68.]
[2] [Compare Letter 1, § 8 (p. 19).]
[3] [See Letter 13, § 6 (p. 233).]

8. Unfortunately, till those means can be obtained (may it be soon), it remains unriddled to us on what principles of "international leverage" the love and beauty are to be provided. But the point I wish you mainly to notice is, that for this general emancipation, and elbow-room for men and steam, you are still required to find "immense plains of wheat abroad." Is it not probable that these immense plains may belong to somebody "abroad" already? And if not, instead of bringing home their produce in flat-bottomed ships, why not establish, on the plains themselves, your own flat-bottomed—I beg pardon,—flat-bellied, persons, instead of living here in glass cases, which surely, even at the British Museum, cannot be associated in your minds with the perfect manifestation of love and beauty? It is true that love is to be measured, in your perfected political economy, by rectangular area, as you will find on reference to the ingenious treatise of Mr. W. Stanley Jevons, M.A., Professor of Logic and Political Economy in Owens College, Manchester, who informs you, among other interesting facts, that pleasure and pain "are the ultimate objects of the calculus of economy," and that a feeling, whether of pleasure or pain, may be regarded as having two dimensions —namely, in duration and intensity, so that the feeling, say of a minute, "may be represented by a rectangle whose base corresponds to the duration of a minute, and whose height is proportioned to the intensity."* The collective

* I quote from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of January 16th. In the more elaborate review given in the *Fortnightly*, I am glad to see that Professor Caird[1] is beginning to perceive the necessity of defining the word "useful";[2] and, though greatly puzzled, is making way towards a definition: but would it not be wiser to abstain from exhibiting himself in his state of puzzlement to the public?

[1] [So Ruskin wrote; but the article to which he referred was in fact by J. E. Cairnes (1823–1875, Professor of Political Economy at Trinity College, Dublin, and at Galway)—a review of Jevons's *Theory of Political Economy* (1871), entitled "New Theories in Political Economy," *Fortnightly Review*, January 1, 1872, No. 6, N.S., vol. xi. pp. 71 *seq.* Cairnes's tentative suggestions towards a definition of "utility" are on pp. 74, 75. For the passages quoted by the *Pall Mall Gazette* from Jevons, see pp. 37 *seq.* of his book (1888 edition). For another reference to Jevons, see Vol. XXII. p. 522 *n.*]

[2] [For Ruskin's definition of "useful," see *Unto this Last*, § 63 (Vol. XVII. p. 87).

area of the series of rectangles will mark the "aggregate of feeling generated."

But the Professor appears unconscious that there is a third dimension of pleasure and pain to be considered, besides their duration and intensity; and that this third dimension is, to some persons, the most important of all—namely, their quality. It is possible to die of a rose in aromatic pain;[1] and, on the contrary, for flies and rats, even pleasure may be the reverse of aromatic. There is swine's pleasure, and dove's; villain's pleasure, and gentleman's, to be arranged, the Professor will find, by higher analysis, in eternally dissimilar rectangles.

4.[2] My friends, the follies of Modern Liberalism, many and great though they be, are practically summed in this denial or neglect of the quality and intrinsic value of things. Its rectangular beatitudes, and spherical benevolences,—theology of universal indulgence, and jurisprudence which will hang no rogues[3]—mean, one and all of them, in the root, incapacity of discerning, or refusal to discern, worth and unworth in anything, and least of all in man; whereas Nature and Heaven command you, at your peril, to discern worth from unworth in everything, and most of all in man.[4] Your main problem is that ancient and trite one, "Who is best man?" and the Fates forgive much,—forgive the wildest, fiercest, cruellest experiments,—if fairly made for the determination of that. Theft and blood-guiltiness are not pleasing in their sight; yet the favouring powers of the spiritual and material world will confirm to you your stolen goods; and their noblest voices applaud the lifting of your spear, and rehearse the sculpture of your shield, if only your

[1] [Pope, *Essay on Man*, Epistle I., 226.]

[2] [§ 4 was quoted by Carlyle in his *Early Kings of Norway* (1875), ch. xvi., his introductory passage being, "Here is one of those strange, piercing, winged, words of Ruskin, which has in it a terrible truth for us in these epochs now come." For Carlyle's inscription in sending a copy of the book to Ruskin, see Vol. XIV. p. 497 *n*. For a later reference by Ruskin to the present passage, see below, p. 385.]

[3] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 89 (Vol. XX. p. 89), and Vol. XXV. p. 168. On the subject of capital punishment, see also, below, p. 667 *n*.]

[4] [Compare *The Crown of Wild Olive*, § 137 (Vol. XVIII. p. 497), where, in a note of 1873, Ruskin refers to this letter.]

robbing and slaying have been in fair arbitrament of that question, "Who is best man?"[1] But if you refuse such inquiry, and maintain every man for his neighbour's match,* —if you give vote to the simple, and liberty to the vile,—the powers of those spiritual and material worlds in due time present you inevitably with the same problem, soluble now only wrong side upwards; and your robbing and slaying must be done then to find out "Who is *worst* man?" Which, in so wide an order of merit, is, indeed, not easy; but a complete Tammany Ring,[2] and lowest circle in the Inferno of Worst, you are sure to find, and to be governed by.

5. And you may note that the wars of men, in this winnowing or sifting function, separate themselves into three distinct stages. In healthy times of early national development, the best men go out to battle, and divide the spoil; in rare generosity, perhaps, giving as much to those who tarry by the stuff, as to those who have followed to the field.[3] In the second, and more ingenious stage, which is the one we have reached now in England and America, the best men still go out to battle, and don't bring any spoil home, but get themselves killed,—or, at all events, well withdrawn from public affairs,[4]—and the worst stop at home, manage the government, and make money out

* Every man as good as his neighbour! you extremely sagacious English persons; and forthwith you establish competitive examination,[5] which drives your boys into idiocy, before you will give them a bit of bread to make their young muscles of! Every man as good as his neighbour! and when I told you, seven years ago, that at least you should give every man his penny of wages, whether he was good or not, so only that he gave you the best that was in him, what did you answer to me?[6]

[1] [Compare *The Crown of Wild Olive*, § 101 (Vol. XVIII. p. 471), where, again in a note of 1873, Ruskin refers to this passage. The idea is that of Carlyle's "*Fortieth* Article, which includes all the other Thirty-nine" (*Latter-Day Pamphlets*, iii.), which in its turn is derived from Plato's "philosopher kings" (*Republic*, v. 473).]

[2] [The organised system of public plunder, carried on by the Tammany Ring in New York, had been exposed (in the *New York Times*) in July 1871. A history of the organization may be read in Bryce's *American Commonwealth*, part v. ch. lxxxviii. Ruskin refers to a Tammany leader in the next Letter, pp. 271–272.]

[3] [See 1 Samuel xxx. 24.]

[4] [Ruskin in his copy here writes, "Major Edwardes," for whom, see *A Knight's Faith* (in *Bibliotheca Pastorum*).]

[5] [Compare, above, p. 140.]

[6] [See *Unto this Last*, §§ 13, 14 (Vol. XVII. pp. 33, 34).]

of the commissariat. (See § 124 of *Munera Pulveris*,[1] and my note there on the last American War.) Then the third and last stage, immediately preceding the dissolution of any nation, is when its best men (such as they are)—stop at home too!—and pay other people to fight for them. And this last stage, not wholly reached in England yet, is, however, within near prospect; at least, if we may again on this point refer to, and trust, the anticipations of Mr. Grant Duff, "who racks his brains, without success, to think of any probable combination of European events in which the assistance of our English force would be half so useful to our allies as money."[2]

6. Next month[3] I will give you some farther account of the operations in favour of their Italian allies in the fourteenth century, effected by the White Company under Sir John Hawkwood (they first crossed the Alps with a German captain, however), not at all consisting in disbursements of money, but such, on the contrary, as to obtain for them—(as you read in my first Letter[4]) the reputation, with good Italian judges, of being the best thieves[5] known at the time. It is in many ways important for you to understand the origin and various tendencies of mercenary warfare; the essential power of which, in Christendom, dates, singularly enough, from the struggle of the free burghers of Italy with a Tory gentleman,[6] a friend of Frederick II. of Germany; the quarrel, of which you shall hear the

[1] [Vol. XVII. p. 246.]
[2] [See above, p. 244.]
[3] [Letter 15, §§ 10 *seq.*]
[4] [Letter 1, § 5 (p. 17).]
[5] ["*i.e.*, skilfullest."—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]
[6] [Ezzelino III., who in 1235 called the Emperor Frederick II. into Lombardy to combat the Lombard League: see Sismondi, ch. xvi. (vol. iii. pp. 9 *seq.*, Paris edition of 1826). See below, p. 260, where the story is again promised, but not given. Ruskin, however, discussed the relations of Frederick to the Italian cities in *Val d'Arno;* where he calls particular attention to the events of 1248 at Florence, when "the first interference of the Germans in Florentine affairs" took place (Vol. XXIII. p. 60). From such events, it seems, following upon Ezzelino's relations with Frederick, Ruskin dates "the essential power of mercenary warfare." For the habit of calling in foreign aid grew, and in the next century Sir John Hawkwood and his Company were constantly employed, "fighting first for one town and then for another" (below, p. 269). For other references to Ezzelino, see Letters 84, § 3, and 93, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 287, 471), and Vol. XII. p. 137 *n.*]

prettiest parts, being one of the most dramatic and vital passages of mediæval history. Afterwards we shall be able to examine, more intelligently, the prospects in store for us according to the—I trust not too painfully racked,—brains of our Under Secretary of State. But I am tired to-day of following modern thought in these unexpectedly attenuated conditions; and I believe you will also be glad to rest, with me, by reading a few words of true history of such life as, in here and there a hollow of the rocks of Europe, just persons have sometimes lived, untracked by the hounds of war. And in laying them before you, I begin to give these letters the completed character I intend for them; first, as it may seem to me needful, commenting on what is passing at the time, with reference always to the principles and plans of economy I have to set before you; and then collecting out of past literature, and in occasional frontispieces or woodcuts, out of past art, what may confirm or illustrate things that are for ever true:[1] choosing the pieces of the series so that, both in art and literature, they may become to you in the strictest sense, educational, and familiarize you with the look and manner of fine work.

7. I want you, accordingly, now to read attentively some pieces of agricultural economy, out of Marmontel's *Contes Moraux*[2] (we too grandly translate the title into *Moral Tales*, for the French word Mœurs does not in accuracy correspond to our Morals); and I think it first desirable that you should know something about Marmontel himself.[3] He was a French gentleman of the old school;

[1] [Compare Letter 49, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 235).]

[2] [Such pieces are given in Letter 17, § 9 (p. 300)—a translation from the beginning of "The Misanthrope Corrected"; in Letter 21, § 20 (p. 366)—a translation from "The Scruple"; and in Letter 40, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 62)—a further translation from "The Misanthrope Corrected." A passage from the *Memoirs* is given in *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 166 *n.*); and one from the *Moral Tales* ("The Connoisseur"), *ibid.*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 67).]

[3] [In reading this account of Marmontel's life and surroundings, it will be remembered that Ruskin speaks elsewhere of his own sympathy "in my constant natural temper, and thoughts of things and people, with Marmontel" (Vol. XVIII. p. 48). A point of contact between Ruskin and one with whom he was generally unsympathetic may here be noted. It was the reading of Marmontel's *Mémoires* that once helped and inspired John Stuart Mill (see his *Autobiography*, 1873, pp. 140, 141).]

not noble, nor, in French sense, even "gentilhomme"; but a peasant's son, who made his way into Parisian society by gentleness, wit, and a dainty and candid literary power. He became one of the humblest, yet honestest, placed scholars at the court of Louis XV., and wrote pretty, yet wise, sentimental stories, in finished French, which I must render as I can in broken English; but, however rudely translated, the sayings and thoughts in them deserve your extreme attention, for in their fine tremulous way, like the blossoming heads of grass in May, they are perfect.

8. For introduction, then, you shall have, to-day, his own description of his native place, Bort, in central south France, and of the circumstances of his child-life. You must take it without further preamble—my pages running short.[1]

"Bort, situated on the river Dordogne, between Auvergne and the province of Limoges, is a frightful place enough, seen by the traveller descending suddenly on it; lying, as it does, at the bottom of a precipice, and looking as if the storm torrents would sweep it away, or as if, some day, it must be crushed under a chain of volcanic rocks, some planted like towers on the height which commands the town, and others already overhanging, or half uprooted: but, once in the valley, and with the eye free to wander there, Bort becomes full of smiles. Above the town, on a green island which the river embraces with equal streams, there is a thicket peopled with birds, and animated also with the motion and noise of a mill. On each side of the river are orchards and fields, cultivated with laborious care. Below the village the valley opens, on one side of the river, into a broad, flat meadow, watered by springs; on the other, into sloping fields, crowned by a belt of hills whose soft slope contrasts with the opposing rocks, and is divided, farther on, by a torrent which rolls and leaps through the forest, and falls into the Dordogne in one of the most beautiful cataracts on the Continent. Near that spot is situated the little farm of St. Thomas, where I used to read Virgil under the blossoming trees that surrounded our bee-hives, and where I made delicious lunches of their honey. On the other side of the town, above the mill, and on the slope to the river, was the enclosure where, on fête days, my father took me to gather grapes from the vines he had himself planted, or cherries, plums, and apples, from the trees he had grafted.

"But what in my memory is the chief charm of my native place is the impression of the affection which my family had for me, and with

[1] [See *Mémoires d'un Père pour servir à l'instruction de ses enfans*, in vols. i.–iv. of *Œuvres Posthumes de Marmontel*, 1804. Ruskin here translates from vol. i. pp. 2–6; in § 9 from pp. 6–8, 9–12; and in § 10, from pp. 12, 13. Dots are inserted in the present edition where Ruskin omits passages.]

which my soul was penetrated in earliest infancy. If there is any goodness in my character, it is to these sweet emotions, and the perpetual happiness of loving, and being loved, that I believe it is owing. What a gift does Heaven bestow on us in the virtue of parents!

"I owed much also to a certain gentleness of manners which reigned then in my native town; and truly the sweet and simple life that one led there must have had a strange attraction, for nothing was more unusual than that the children of Bort should ever go away from it. In their youth they were well educated, and in the neighbouring[1] colleges their colony distinguished itself; but they came back to their homes as a swarm of bees comes back to the hive with its spoil.

"I learned to read in a little convent where the nuns were friends of my mother. . . . Thence I passed to the school of a priest of the town, who gratuitously, and for his own pleasure, devoted himself to the instruction of children; he was the only son of a shoemaker, one of the honestest fellows in the world; and this churchman was a true model of filial piety. I can yet remember, as if I had seen it but a moment since, the air of quiet courtesy and mutual regard which the old man and his son maintained to each other; the one never losing sight of the dignity of the priesthood, nor the other of the sanctity of the paternal character."

9. I interrupt my translation for a moment to ask you to notice how this finished scholar applies his words. A vulgar writer would most probably have said "the sanctity of the priesthood" and "the dignity of the paternal character." But it is quite possible that a priest may not be a saint, yet (admitting the theory of priesthood at all) his authority and office are not, therefore, invalidated. On the other hand, a father may be entirely inferior to his son, incapable of advising him, and, if he be wise, claiming no strict authority over him. But the relation between the two is always sacred.

"The Abbé Vaissière" (that was his name), "after he had fulfilled his duty at the church, divided the rest of his time between reading, and the lessons he gave to us. In fine weather, a little walk, and sometimes for exercise a game at mall in the meadow, were his only amusements. For all society he had two friends, people of esteem in our town. They lived together in the most peaceful intimacy, seeing each other every day, and every day with the same pleasure in their meeting; and for fulfilment of good fortune, they died within a very little while of each other. I have scarcely ever seen an example of so sweet and constant equality in the course of human life.

"At this school I had a comrade, who was from my infancy an object

[1] ["Neighbouring, not too far away—not compulsory as our first colonists to Botany Bay."—*Author's MS. note in his copy.*]

of emulation to me. His deliberate and rational bearing, his industry in study, the care he took of his books, on which I never saw a stain; his fair hair always so well combed, his dress always fresh in its simplicity, his linen always white, were to me a constantly visible example; and it is rare that a child inspires another child with such esteem as I had for him. His father was a labourer in a neighbouring village, and well known to mine. I used to walk with his son to see him in his home. How he used to receive us, the white-haired old man,—the good cream! the good brown bread that he gave us! and what happy presages did he not please himself in making for my future life, because of my respect for his old age. Twenty years afterwards, his son and I met at Paris; I recognized in him the same character of prudence and kindness which I had known in him at school, and it has been to me no slight pleasure to name one of his children at baptism. . . .

"When I was eleven years old, just past, my master judged me fit to enter the fourth class of students; and my father consented, though unwillingly, to take me to the College of Mauriac. His reluctance was wise. I must justify it by giving some account of our household.

"I was the eldest of many children; my father, a little rigid, but entirely good under his severe manner, loved his wife to idolatry; and well he might! I have never been able to understand how, with the simple education of our little convent at Bort, she had attained so much pleasantness in wit, so much elevation in heart, and a sentiment of propriety so just, pure, and subtle. My good Bishop of Limoges has often spoken to me since, at Paris, with most tender interest, of the letters that my mother wrote in recommending me to him.

"My father revered her as much as he loved; and blamed her only for her too great tenderness for me: but my grandmother loved me no less. I think I see her yet—the good little old woman! the bright nature that she had! the gentle gaiety! Economist of the house, she presided over its management, and was an example to us all of filial tenderness, for she had also her own mother and her husband's mother to take care of. I am now dating far back, being just able to remember my great-grandmother drinking her little cup of wine at the corner of the hearth; but, during the whole of my childhood, my grandmother and her three sisters lived with us, and among all these women, and a swarm of children, my father stood alone, their support. With little means enough, all could live. Order, economy, and labour,—a little commerce, but above all things, frugality" (Note again the good scholar's accuracy of language: "Economy" the right arrangement of things, "Frugality" the careful and fitting use of them)—"these maintained us all in comfort. The little garden produced vegetables enough for the need of the house; the orchard gave us fruit, and our quinces, apples, and pears, preserved in the honey of our bees, made, during the winter, for the children and old women, the most exquisite breakfasts."

10. I interrupt again to explain to you, once for all, a chief principle with me in translation. Marmontel says, "for the children and *good* old women." Were I quoting the

French, I would give his exact words; but, in translating, I miss the word "good," of which I know you are not likely to see the application at the moment. You would not see why the old women should be called good, when the question is only what they had for breakfast. Marmontel means that if they had been bad old women they would have wanted gin and bitters for breakfast, instead of honey-candied quinces; but I can't always stop to tell you Marmontel's meaning, or other people's; and therefore, if I think it not likely to strike you, and the word weakens the sentence in the direction I want you to follow, I omit it in translating, as I do also entire sentences, here and there; but never, as aforesaid, in actual quotation.

"The flock of the fold of St. Thomas, clothed, with its wool, now the women, and now the children; my aunt spun it, and spun also the hemp which made our under-dress; the children of our neighbours came to beat it with us in the evening by lamp-light (our own walnut trees giving us the oil), and formed a ravishing picture. The harvest of our little farm assured our subsistence; the wax and honey of our bees, of which one of my aunts took extreme care, were a revenue, with little capital. The oil of our fresh walnuts had flavour and smell, which we liked better than those of the oil-olive, and our cakes of buck-wheat, hot, with the sweet butter of Mont Dor, were for us the most inviting of feasts. By the fireside, in the evening, while we heard the pot boiling with sweet chestnuts in it, our grandmother would roast a quince under the ashes and divide it among us children. The most sober of women made us all gourmands. Thus, in a household, where nothing was ever lost, very little expense supplied all our further wants; the dead wood of the neighbouring forests was in abundance, the fresh mountain butter and most delicate cheese cost little; even wine was not dear, and my father used it soberly."

11. That is as much, I suppose, as you will care for at once. Insipid enough, you think?—or perhaps, in one way, too sapid; one's soul and affections mixed up so curiously with quince-marmalade? It is true, the French have a trick of doing that; but why not take it the other way, and say, one's quince-marmalade mixed up with affection? We adulterate our affections in England, nowadays, with a yellower, harder, baser thing than that; and there would surely be no harm in our confectioners putting a little soul into their sugar,—if they put in nothing worse?

But as to the simplicity,—or, shall we say, wateriness,—of the style, I can answer you more confidently. Milkiness would be a better word, only one does not use it of styles. This writing of Marmontel's is different from the writing you are accustomed to, in that there is never an exaggerating phrase in it—never a needlessly strained or metaphorical word, and never a misapplied one. Nothing is said pithily, to show the author's power, diffusely, to show his observation, nor quaintly, to show his fancy. He is not thinking of himself as an author at all; but of himself as a boy. He is not remembering his native valley as a subject for fine writing, but as a beloved real place, about which he may be garrulous, perhaps, but not rhetorical. But *is* it, or was it, or could it ever be, a real place indeed?—you will ask next. Yes, real in the severest sense; with realities that are to last for ever, when this London and Manchester life of yours shall have become a horrible, and, but on evidence, incredible, romance of the past.

12. Real, but only partially seen; still more partially told. The rightnesses only perceived; the felicities only remembered; the landscape seen as if spring lasted always; the trees in blossom or fruitage evermore: no shedding of leaf: of winter, nothing remembered but its fireside.

Yet not untrue. The landscape is indeed there, and the life; seen through glass that dims them, but not distorts; and which is only dim to Evil.

18. But now supply, with your own undimmed insight and better knowledge of human nature; or invent, with imaginative malice, what evil you think necessary to make the picture true. Still—make the worst of it you will—it cannot but remain somewhat incredible to you, like the pastoral scene in a pantomime, more than a piece of history.

Well; but the pastoral scene in a pantomime itself,—tell me,—is it meant to be a bright or a gloomy part of your Christmas spectacle? Do you mean it to exhibit, by contrast, the blessedness of your own life, in the streets

of sale, because I think authors ought not to be too proud to sell their own books, any more than painters to sell their own pictures.

I intend the retail dealer to charge twenty shillings for the plain volumes, and thirty shillings for the others. If he declines offering them for that percentage, it is for the public to judge how much he gets usually.

previous arrangement was, in some degree, satisfactory; the present, not only very unsatisfactory, but absurd in the highest degree. By-the-bye, this volume has a second title: why was not a similar title put to Vol. I.? The set will be incomplete without it.

'We are, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

'For James Parker & Co.,

'JOHN VAUGHAN.

'MR. G. ALLEN.'

"You may as well also see a copy of my reply:—

'DENMARK HILL, S.E.

'GENTLEMEN,—My agent has forwarded to me your letter of the 26th. The injury done me by the non-exposition of my books on your table will, of course, be grave; but I am already accustomed to a modest way of life, and must contract my expenses accordingly. Of the degree of incivility with which, under any given circumstances, it is advisable to treat your customers, you alone can judge; but respecting the absurdity or rationality of the mode of sale I adopt, there must, I conceive, be two opinions. In the present state of the book-selling trade it cannot but appear absurd that a book of which the stated price is 9s. 6d. should not be sold for 7s. 6d.; but you will find that, at least, respecting all books of mine, this economical paradox will continue to exist,

'I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

'J. RUSKIN.

'MESSRS. JAMES PARKER & Co.'"

Here ed. 1 ends. The following correspondence, called forth by the present Letter in *Fors*, is here reprinted from pp. 51–53 of *Letters upon Subjects of General Interest from John Ruskin to Various Correspondents* (privately printed 1892):—

"21 CLAPHAM ROAD, S.W.

"JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D. "*February 8th*, 1872.

"SIR,—As a reader of *Fors Clavigera* and others of your Works, may I ask a question or two relative to some statements you have made in this month's number of *Fors*?

"In the *Notes and Correspondence* you invite our attention to a notice which is sent out with each revised volume of your Works, in one place of which you say that the price of each volume will be 'half a guinea for those without plates, and a guinea for the illustrated ones.' You immediately follow upon this by saying you will sell them for 9s. 6d. the plain volumes, and 19s. the illustrated ones. Now what does this mean, when there is to be no abatement? May I also ask if all your former Works are to be issued upon this your method of political economy, and are they to be retitled and revolumed?

"One more question. Since you disparage so much Iron and its manufacture, may it be asked how your books are printed, and how is their paper made? Probably you are aware that both printing and paper-making machines are made of that material.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"J. GODFREY GIBBLE."

Ruskin replied as follows:—

"CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD.

"*February 10th*, 1872.

"J. GODFREY GIBBLE, ESQ.

"SIR,—I am indeed aware that printing and paper-making machines are made of iron. I am aware also, which you perhaps are not, that

ploughshares and knives and forks are. And I am aware, which you certainly are not, that I am writing with an iron pen. And you will find in *Fors Clavigera*, and in all my other writings, which you may have done me the honour to read, that my statement is that things which have to do the work of iron should be made of iron, and things which have to do the work of wood should be made of wood; but that (for instance) hearts should not be made of iron, nor heads of wood—and this last statement you may wisely consider, when next it enters into yours to ask questions.

"I am, Sir,
"Your obedient servant,
"J. RUSKIN."]

# LETTER 15

## THE FOUR FUNERALS[1]

DENMARK HILL,
1*st March*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—The Tory gentleman whose character I have to sketch for you, in due counterbalance of that story of republican justice in California,[2] was, as I told you, the friend of Friedrich II. of Germany, another great Friedrich[3] preceding the Prussian one by some centuries, and living quite as hard a life of it. But before I can explain to you anything either about him, or his friend, I must develop the statement made above (11, § 5), of the complex modes of injustice respecting the means of maintenance, which have hitherto held in all ages among the three great classes of soldiers, clergy, and peasants. I mean, by "peasants," the producers of food, out of land or water; by "clergy," men who live by teaching or exhibition of behaviour; and by "soldiers," those who live by fighting, either by robbing wise peasants, or getting themselves paid by foolish ones. Into these three classes the world's honourably industrious multitudes are essentially hitherto divided.* The legitimate merchant of course exists, and can exist, only on the small percentage of pay obtainable for the transfer of goods; and the manufacturer and artist are, in healthy society, developed

* "Before 'multitudes' insert words, 'honourably industrious' (theft, when open, never being hitherto considered dishonourable)."[3]—*Index to Vols. I. and II.* [under "Classes"].

[1] [For the title, see § 16. "Sir John and Sir Roger" was a rejected title for this Letter.]

[2] [See above, pp. 240–241, 249. Ruskin, however, does not tell the story of Ezzelin, the friend of the Emperor Frederick II., but digresses to that of Sir John Hawkwood a century later; to which he had already referred in the First Letter, § 5 (p. 16). For Ruskin's interest in Frederick II., see Vol. XXIII. p. 57 *n.* He reverts to the promised account of that Emperor below, pp. 365, 388, 621.]

[3] [See Letters 7, § 13, and 14, § 1 (pp. 127, 243).]

states of the peasant. The morbid power of manufacture and commerce in our own age is an accidental condition of national decrepitude; the injustices connected with it are mainly those of the gambling-house, and quite unworthy of analytical inquiry; but the unjust relations of the soldier, clergyman, and peasant have hitherto been constant in all great nations;—they are full of mystery and beauty in their iniquity; they require the most subtle, and deserve the most reverent, analysis.

2. The first root of distinction between the soldier and peasant is in barrenness and fruitfulness of possessed ground; the inhabitant of sands and rocks "redeeming his share" (see speech of Roderick in the *Lady of the Lake*[1]) from the inhabitant of corn-bearing ground. The second root of it is delight in athletic exercise, resulting in beauty of person and perfectness of race, and causing men to be content, or even triumphant, in accepting continual risk of death, if by such risk they can escape the injury of servile toil.

3. Again, the first root of distinction between clergyman and peasant is the greater intelligence, which instinctively desires both to learn and teach, and is content to accept the smallest maintenance, if it may remain so occupied. (Look back to Marmontel's account of his tutor.[2])

The second root of distinction is that which gives rise to the word "clergy," properly signifying persons chosen by lot, or in a manner elect, for the practice and exhibition of good behaviour; the visionary or passionate anchorite being content to beg his bread, so only that he may have leave by undisturbed prayer or meditation, to bring himself into closer union with the spiritual world; and the peasant being always content to feed him,[3] on condition of his becoming venerable in that higher state, and, as a peculiarly blessed person, a communicator of blessing.

4. Now, both these classes of men remain noble, as long as they are content with daily bread, if they may be

[1] [Canto v. stanza vii.]
[2] [See Letter 14, § 9 (p. 252).]
[3] [Compare Letter 11, § 5 (p. 185).]

allowed to live in their own way; but the moment the one of them uses his strength, and the other his sanctity,[1] to get riches with, or pride of elevation over other men, both of them become tyrants, and capable of any degree of evil. Of the clerk's relation to the peasant, I will only tell you, now, that, as you learn more of the history of Germany and Italy in the Middle Ages, and, indeed, almost to this day, you will find the soldiers of Germany are always trying to get mastery over the body of Italy, and the clerks of Italy are always trying to get mastery over the mind of Germany;—this main struggle between Emperor and Pope, as the respective heads of the two parties, absorbing in its vortex, or attracting to its standards, all the minor disorders and dignities of war; and quartering itself in a quaintly heraldic fashion with the methods of encroachment on the peasant, separately invented by baron and priest.

5. The relation of the baron to the peasant, however, is all that I can touch upon to-day; and first, note that this word "baron" is the purest English you can use to denote the soldier, soldato, or "fighter, hired with pence, or soldi,"[2] as such. Originally it meant the servant of a soldier, or, as a Roman clerk of Nero's time* tells us (the literary antipathy thus early developing itself in its future nest), "the extreme fool, who is a fool's servant"; but soon it came to be associated with a Greek word meaning "heavy"; and so got to signify heavy-handed, or heavy-armed, or generally prevailing in manhood. For some time it was used to signify the authority of a husband; a woman called herself her husband's† "ancilla" (handmaid), and him

* Cornutus, quoted by Ducange[3] under the word "Baro."

† I am told in the north such pleasant fiction still holds in the Teesdale district; the wife calling her husband "my masterman."

[1] [It may seem curious that Ruskin should use this word of the clergy when he has just praised Marmontel's precision of language for not doing so (see last Letter, § 9); but here Ruskin is speaking of the ideal clergy.]

[2] [Compare *Laws of Fésole*, § 10 (Vol. XV. p. 376). On the derivation of "soldier," see Johnson's *Dictionary*.]

[3] [For Ducange's book, see Vol. XXII. p. 281 *n*. The note by Cornutus is on Persius, *Sat.*, v.]

her "baron." Finally the word got settled in the meaning of a strong fighter receiving regular pay. "Mercenaries are persons who serve for a regularly received pay; the same are called 'Barones' from the Greek, because they are strong in labours."[1] This is the definition given by an excellent clerk of the seventh century, Isidore, Bishop of Seville, and I wish you to recollect it, because it perfectly unites the economical idea of a Baron, as a person paid for fighting, with the physical idea of one, as prevailing in battle by weight, not without some attached idea of slight stupidity;—the notion holding so distinctly even to this day that Mr. Matthew Arnold thinks the entire class aptly describable under the term "barbarians."[2]

At all events, the word is the best general one for the dominant rank of the Middle Ages, as distinguished from the pacific peasant, and so delighting in battle that one of the most courteous barons of the fourteenth century tells a young knight who comes to him for general advice, that the moment war fails in any country, he must go into another.

"Et se la guerre est faillie,
Départie
Fay tóst de cellui païs;
N'arresté quoy que nul die."

"And if the war has ended,
Departure
Make quickly from that country;
Do not stop, whatever anybody says to you." *

* "The Book of a Hundred Ballads." You shall hear more of them, soon.[3]

[1] [Ruskin translates from Ducange; Isidore thus connects the word with βαρύς.]

[2] [See *Culture and Anarchy*, p. 102 in the first edition (1869): "I often, when I want to distinguish clearly the aristocratic class from the Philistines proper, or middle-class, name the former in my own mind, *the Barbarians*; and when I go through the country, and see this and that beautiful and imposing seat of theirs crowning the landscape, 'There,' I say to myself, 'is a great fortified post of the Barbarians.'" For another reference by Ruskin to this passage, see "The Riders of Tarentum," § 9 (Vol. XX. p. 393).]

[3] [For particulars of this book, see Vol. XXIII. p. xxiii. The ballad here quoted is No. xiii. in the series, p. 25. For another reference to the present passage, see *St. Mark's Rest*, § 69 (Vol. XXIV. p. 262). Ruskin quotes another ballad at the end of Letter 32 (p. 601), but does not otherwise tell us more of the book in *Fors*; at this time he was working on a translation of the Ballads (see Vol. XXIII. as just cited, and, in a later volume, various letters to C. E. Norton).]

6. But long before this class distinction was clearly established, the more radical one between pacific and warrior *nations* had shown itself cruelly in the history of Europe.

You will find it greatly useful to fix in your minds these following elementary ideas of that history:—

The Roman Empire was already in decline at the birth of Christ. It was ended five hundred years afterwards. The wrecks of its civilization, mingled with the broken fury of the tribes which had destroyed it, were then gradually softened and purged by Christianity; and hammered into shape by three great warrior nations, on the north, south, and west, worshippers of the storms, of the sun, and of fate. Three Christian kings, Henry the Fowler of Germany, Charlemagne in France, and Alfred in England, typically represent the justice of humanity, gradually forming the feudal system out of the ruined elements of Roman luxury and law,[1] under the disciplining torment inflicted by the mountaineers of Scandinavia, India, and Arabia.

7. This forging process takes another five hundred years. Christian feudalism may be considered as definitely organized at the end of the tenth century, and its political strength established, having for the most part absorbed the soldiers of the north, and soon to be aggressive on those of Mount Imaus and Mount Sinai.[2] It lasts another five hundred years, and then our own epoch, that of atheistic liberalism, begins, practically necessitated,—the liberalism by the two discoveries of gunpowder and printing,—and the atheism by the unfortunate persistence of the clerks in teaching children what they cannot understand, and

[1] [For further notice of the work, in this respect, of Henry the Fowler, see Vol. XVIII. p. 517, and Vol. XXIII. p. 27; of Charlemagne, *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 416), *Bible of Amiens*, ch. i. § 34, and *Pleasures of England*, § 21; of Alfred, *Pleasures of England*, § 106.]

[2] [In this rough blackboard sketch of historical geography, Ruskin notes (1) the absorption by Christian Europe of "the soldiers of the north" ("the mountaineers of Scandinavia")—that is, the Goths and Vikings. (2) By "the mountaineers of India" ("soldiers of Mount Imaus," or Western Himalayas), against whom Christian feudalism was "soon to be aggressive," he seems to mean the Huns: see Gibbon, ch. xxvi., where, in describing their early homes, he says "in the valleys of Imaus, they found a more ample space." (3) The "mountaineers of Arabia" ("soldiers of Mount Sinai") are the Arabs, and the Moors.]

employing young consecrated persons to assert in pulpits what they do not know.[1]

8. That is enough generalization for you to-day. I want now to fix your thoughts on one small point in all this; —the effect of the discovery of gunpowder in promoting liberalism.

Its first operation was to destroy the power of the baron, by rendering it impossible for him to hold his castle, with a few men, against a mob. The fall of the Bastille is a typical fact in history of this kind; but, of course long previously, castellated architecture had been felt to be useless. Much other building of a noble kind vanishes together with it; nor less (which is a much greater loss than the building), the baronial habit of living in the country.

Next to his castle, the baron's armour becomes useless to him; and all the noble habits of life vanish which depend on the wearing of a distinctive dress,[2] involving the constant exercise of accurately disciplined strength, and the public assertion of an exclusive occupation in life, involving exposure to danger.

Next, the baron's sword and spear become useless to him; and encounter, no longer the determination of who is best man, but of who is best marksman, which is a very different question indeed.

9. Lastly, the baron being no more able to maintain his authority by force, seeks to keep it by form; he reduces his own subordinates to a fine machinery, and obtains the command of it by purchase or intrigue. The necessity of distinction of character is in war so absolute, and the tests of it are so many, that, in spite of every abuse, good officers get sometimes the command of squadrons or of ships; and one good officer in a hundred is enough to save the honour of an army, and the credit of a system; but generally speaking, our officers at this day do not know their business; and the result is—that, paying thirty millions a

[1] [On this subject, compare Letter 49, § 6 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 238).]

[2] [Compare Vol. XIX. p. 185; the other passages there noted; Vol. XX. p. 377; and Letter 58, §§ 17, 18 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 433).]

year for our army, we are informed by Mr. Grant Duff that the army we have bought is of no use, and we must pay still more money to produce any effect upon foreign affairs.[1] So, you see, this is the actual state of things,—and it is the perfection of liberalism,—that first we cannot buy a Raphael for five-and-twenty pounds, because we have to pay five hundred for a pocket-pistol;[2] and next, we are coolly told that the pocket-pistol won't go off, and that we must still pay foreign constables to keep the peace.

10. In old times, under the pure baronial power, things used, as I told you, to be differently managed by us. We were, all of us, in some sense barons; and paid *ourselves* for fighting. We had no pocket-pistols, nor Woolwich Infants[3]—nothing but bows and spears, good horses (I hear, after two-thirds of our existing barons have ruined their youth in horse-racing, and a good many of them their fortunes also, we are now in irremediable want of horses for our cavalry[4]), and bright armour. Its brightness, observe, was an essential matter with us. Last autumn I saw, even in modern England, something bright; low sunshine at six o'clock[5] of an October morning, glancing down a long bank of fern covered with hoar-frost, in Yewdale, at the head of Coniston Water. I noted it as more beautiful than anything I had ever seen, to my remembrance, in gladness and infinitude of light. Now, Scott uses this very image to describe the look of the chain-mail of a soldier in one of these free* companies;—Le Balafré, Quentin Durward's

* This singular use of the word "free" in baronial times, corresponding to our present singular use of it respecting trade, we will examine in due time.[6] A soldier who fights only for his own hand, and a merchant who

[1] [See Letter 14, § 5 (p. 249).]
[2] [See Letter 12, § 21 (p. 214).]
[3] [See Letter 2, § 20 *n.* (p. 43).]
[4] [Then, as usually, a subject of discussion in the press: see, for instance, a letter from the manager of the Agricultural Hall Horse Show in the *Times*, January 15, 1872.]
[5] [For correction of the time, see Letter 32, § 25 (p. 603).]
[6] [Ruskin does not return to the subject in connexion with the "free" companies of mercenaries; but for the "slavery" of work under modern conditions of trade, see Letters 46, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 178–179) and 89, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 402).]

uncle: "The archer's gorget, arm-pieces, and gauntlets were of the finest steel, curiously inlaid with silver, and his hauberk, or shirt of mail, was as clear and bright as the frost-work of a winter morning upon fern or briar."[1] And Sir John Hawkwood's men, of whose proceedings in Italy I have now to give you some account, were named throughout Italy, as I told you in my first letter,[2] the White Company of English,—"Societas alba Anglicorum," or generally, the Great White Company, merely from the splendour of their arms. They crossed the Alps in 1861, and immediately caused a curious change in the Italian language. Azario lays great stress on their tall spears with a very long iron point at the extremity; this formidable weapon being for the most part wielded by two, and sometimes moreover by three individuals, being so heavy and huge, that whatever it came in contact with was pierced through and through. He says, that* "at their backs the mounted bowmen carried their bows; whilst those used by the infantry archers were so enormous that the long arrows discharged from them were shot with one end of the bow resting on the ground instead of being drawn in the air."[3]

11. Of the English bow you have probably heard before, though I shall have, both of it, and the much inferior Greek bow made of two goats' horns, to tell you some things[4] that may not have come in your way; but the change these English caused in the Italian language, and afterwards generally in that of chivalry, was by their use

sells only for his own hand, are of course, in reality, equally the slaves of the persons who employ them. Only those soldiers and merchants are truly free, who fight and sell as their country needs, and bids them.

* I always give Mr. Rawdon Brown's translation, from his work, *The English in Italy*, already quoted.[5]

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[1] [*Quentin Durward*, ch. v.]

[2] [Letter 1, § 5 (p. 16).]

[3] [The passage in Azario's history, thus translated by Rawdon Brown, is to be found in Muratori's *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, vol. xvi. p. 380 C, D.]

[4] [This, however, was not done; for "the Greek bow made of two goats' horns," see *Iliad*, iv. 110.]

[5] [Letter 1, § 5 *n.* (p. 17).]

taken back to his country, we freely concede the permission,[1] lest it be said that your sublimity asked anything in vain, or fruitlessly, of our reverential humility.

"We, however, with due deference, and all possible earnestness, recommend to your Highness' graciousness, the son and posterity of said Sir John, who acquired no mean repute, and glory for the English name in Italy, as also our merchants and citizens."

14. It chanced by the appointment of the third Fors,* to which, you know, I am bound in these letters uncomplainingly to submit, that, just as I had looked out this letter for you, given at Florence in the year 1396, I found in an old bookshop two gazettes nearly three hundred years later, namely, Number 20 of the *Mercurius Publicus*, and Number 50 of the *Parliamentary Intelligencer*, the latter comprising the same "foraign intelligence, with the affairs now in agitation in England, Scotland, and Ireland, for information of the people. Publish'd by order, from Monday, December 3rd, to Monday, December 10th, 1660." This little gazette informs us in its first advertisement, that in London, November 30th, 1660, was lost, in or about this city, a small paper book of accounts and receipts, with a red leather cover, with two clasps on it; and that anybody that can give intelligence of it to the city crier at Bread Street end in Cheapside, "shall have five shillings for their pains, and more if they desire it." And its last paragraph is as follows:—"On Saturday (December 8), the Most Honourable House of Peers concurred with the Commons in the order for the digging up the carkasses of Oliver Cromwell, Henry Ireton, John Bradshaw, and Thomas Pride, and carrying them on an Hurdle to Tyburn, where they are to be first hang'd up in their Coffins, and then buried under the Gallows."[2]

* Remember, briefly always, till I can tell you more about it,[3] that the first Fors is Courage, the second Patience, the third Fortune.[4]

[1] [Hawkwood's remains were, at his widow's request, brought to England and buried there; probably at Hedingham Sibil. His monument is in the Cathedral at Florence.]

[2] [For other references to this, see Vol. XXIII. p. 79.]

[3] [See below, p. 291 *n.*]

[4] [Compare Letter 2, § 2 (p. 28).]

The *Public Mercury* is of date Thursday, June 14th, to Thursday, June 21st, 1660, and contains a report of the proceeding at the House of Commons, on Saturday, the 16th, of which the first sentence is:—

"RESOLVED.—That his Majesty be humbly moved to call in Milton's two books,[1] and John Goodwin's, and order them to be burnt by the common hangman."

15. By the final appointment of the third Fors, I chanced just after finding these gazettes, to come upon the following passage in my *Daily Telegraph*:—

"Every head was uncovered, and although among those who were farthest off there was a pressing forward and a straining to catch sight of the coffin, there was nothing unseemly or rude. The Catafalque was received at the top of the stairs by Col. Braine and other officers of the 9th, and placed in the centre of the vestibule on a rich velvet pall on which rested crowns, crosses, and other devices, composed of tuberoses and camellias, while beautiful lilies were scattered over the corpse, which was clothed in full regimentals, the cap and sword resting on the body. The face, with the exception of its pallor, was unchanged, and no one, unless knowing the circumstances, would have believed that Fisk had died a violent death. The body was contained in a handsome rosewood casket, with gold-plated handles, and a splendid plate bearing the inscription, "James Fisk, jun., died January 7th, 1872, in the 37th year of his age."[2]

16. In the foregoing passages, you see, there is authentic account given you of the various honours rendered by the enlightened public of the fourteenth, seventeenth, and nineteenth centuries to the hero of their day or hour; the persons thus reverenced in their burial, or unburial, being all, by profession, soldiers; and holding rank in that profession, very properly describable by the pretty modern English word "Colonel"—leader, that is to say, of a Coronel,

[1] [Namely, his *Eikonoklastes* and *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano contra Salmasium*. The book by John Goodwin (1594–1665, republican divine), ordered to be burnt on the same occasion, was his Ὑβριστοδίκαι (1649), in which he defended the proceedings against Charles I.]

[2] [*Daily Telegraph*, January 24, 1872. James Fisk, *impresario* and financier, and a member of the Erie Railway "ring," had been assassinated on January 7. He was Colonel of the 9th New York Regiment.]

Coronella, or daisy-like circlet of men; as in the last case of the three before us, of the Tammany "Ring."

You are to observe, however, that the first of the three, Colonel Sir John Hawkwood, is a soldier both in heart and deed, every inch of him; and that the second, Colonel Oliver Cromwell,[1] was a soldier in deed, but not in heart; being by natural disposition and temper fitted rather for a Huntingdonshire farmer, and not at all caring to make any money by his military business; and finally, that Colonel James Fisk, jun., was a soldier in heart, to the extent of being willing to receive any quantity of soldi from any paymaster, but no more a soldier in deed than you are yourselves, when you go piping and drumming past my gate at Denmark Hill (I should rather say—banging, than drumming, for I observe you hit equally hard and straightforward to every tune; so that from a distance it sounds just like beating carpets), under the impression that you are defending your country as well as amusing yourselves.

17. Of the various honours, deserved or undeserved, done by enlightened public opinion to these three soldiers, I leave you to consider till next month,[2] merely adding, to put you more entirely in command of the facts, that Sir John Hawkwood (Acuto, the Italians called him, by happy adaptation of syllables[3]), whose entire subsistence was one of systematic military robbery, had, when he was first buried, the honour, rarely granted even to the citizens of Florence, of having his coffin laid on the font of the House of his name-saint, St. John Baptist—that same font which Dante was accused of having impiously broken to save a child from drowning, in "mio bel San Giovanni."[4] I am soon going to Florence myself to draw this beautiful San Giovanni for the beginning of my lectures on Architecture,

[1] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 416).]

[2] [See Letter 16, § 2 (p. 279).]

[3] [Hawkwood spelt his name Haucud, Haucwod, and Haukutd. It was Italianised into Aguto or Acuto, Villani explaining that it means in English "Falcone in Bosco."]

[4] [*Inferno*, xix. 17: compare Vol. XXII. p. 343, and Vol. XXIII. pp. 62, 269, 473.]

at Oxford;[1] and you shall have a print of the best sketch I can make, to assist your meditations on the honours of soldiership, and efficacy of baptism. Meantime, let me ask you to read an account of one funeral more, and to meditate also on that. It is given in the most exquisite and finished piece which I know of English Prose literature in the eighteenth century;[2] and, however often you may have seen it already, I beg of you to read it now, both in connection with the funeral ceremonies described hitherto, and for the sake of its educational effect on your own taste in writing:—

"We last night received a piece of ill news at our club, which very sensibly afflicted every one of us. I question not but my readers themselves will be troubled at the hearing of it. To keep them no longer in suspense, Sir Roger de Coverley is dead. He departed this life at his house in the country, after a few weeks' sickness. Sir Andrew Freeport has a letter from one of his correspondents in those parts, that informs him the old man caught a cold at the county-sessions, as he was very warmly promoting an address of his own penning, in which he succeeded according to his wishes. But this particular comes from a Whig justice of peace who was always Sir Roger's enemy and antagonist. I have letters both from the chaplain and Captain Sentry, which mention nothing of it, but are filled with many particulars to the honour of the good old man. I have

[1] [Ruskin made his sketch in 1872; it is No. 99 in the Reference Series at Oxford, and is in this edition of his Works reproduced on Plate IV. of Vol. XXIII. (p. 17). He himself did not, however, publish any print of the subject.]

[2] [From the *Spectator*, No. 517 (written by Addison). In illustration of Ruskin's feeling for Addison, the following letter sent to Mr. J. Dykes Campbell, in acknowledgment of a copy of *Some Portions of Essays contributed to the "Spectator" by Mr. Joseph Addison, now first printed from his MS. Note-book* (printed at Glasgow for James Dykes Campbell, by Bell and Bain: April 1864), may be cited:—

"DENMARK HILL, LONDON, S.E.,
"*August 19th*, 1864.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am sincerely obliged to you for this publication; it is of very great interest to me in itself, and it is a great help to me to know that my own work has been of use anywhere.

"What precious MSS. these are of yours! I like that old quiet English work; in the midst of our steaming and puffing, it is like calm fresh air.

"Very sincerely yours,
"J. RUSKIN."

The letter is here reprinted from a privately-issued volume of *Letters on Art and Literature*, by John Ruskin, edited by Thomas J. Wise, 1894, p. 94.]

likewise a letter from the butler, who took so much care of me last summer when I was at the knight's house. As my friend the butler mentions, in the simplicity of his heart, several circumstances the others have passed over in silence, I shall give my reader a copy of his letter, without any alteration or diminution.

"'Honoured Sir,—Knowing that you was my old master's good friend, I could not forbear sending you the melancholy news of his death, which has afflicted the whole country, as well as his poor servants, who loved him, I may say, better than we did our lives. I am afraid he caught his death the last county-sessions, where he would go to see justice done to a poor widow woman, and her fatherless children, that had been wronged by a neighbouring gentleman; for you know, Sir, my good master was always the poor man's friend. Upon his coming home, the first complaint he made was, that he had lost his roast-beef stomach, not being able to touch a sirloin, which was served up according to custom: and you know he used to take great delight in it. From that time forward he grew worse and worse, but still kept a good heart to the last. Indeed we were once in great hope of his recovery, upon a kind message that was sent him from the widow lady whom he had made love to the forty last years of his life; but this only proved a light'ning before death. He has bequeathed to this lady, as a token of his love, a great pearl necklace, and a couple of silver bracelets set with jewels, which belonged to my good old lady his mother. He has bequeathed the fine white gelding that he used to ride a hunting upon, to his chaplain, because he thought he would be kind to him, and has left you all his books. He has moreover bequeathed to the chaplain a very pretty tenement with good lands about it. It being a very cold day when he made his will, he left for mourning to every man in the parish, a great frize-coat, and to every woman a black riding-hood. It was a most moving sight to see him take leave of his poor servants, commending us all for our fidelity, whilst we were not able to speak a word for weeping. As we most of us are grown grey-headed in our dear master's service, he has left us pensions and legacies, which we may live very comfortably upon the remaining part of our days. He has bequeathed a great deal more in charity, which is not yet come to my knowledge, and it is peremptorily said in the parish, that he has left money to build a steeple to the church; for he was heard to say some time ago, that if he lived two years longer, Coverley church should have a steeple to it. The chaplain tells every body that he made a very good end, and never speaks of him without tears. He was buried, according to his own directions, among the family of the Coverleys, on the left hand of his father Sir Arthur. The coffin was carried by six of his tenants, and the pall held up by six of the quorum. The whole parish followed the corpse with heavy hearts, and in their mourning suits; the men in frize, and the women in riding-hoods. Captain Sentry, my master's nephew, has taken possession of the Hall-house, and the whole estate. When my old master saw him a little before his death, he took him by the hand, and wished him joy of the estate which was falling to him, desiring him only to make a good use of it, and to pay the several legacies, and the gifts of charity, which he told him he had left as quit-rents upon the estate. The captain truly seems a courteous man, though he says but little. He makes much of

those whom my master loved, and shews great kindness to the old house-dog, that you know my poor master was so fond of. It would have gone to your heart to have heard the moans the dumb creature made on the day of my master's death. He has never enjoyed himself since; no more has any of us. It was the melancholiest day for the poor people that ever happened in Worcestershire. This is all from,

"'Honoured Sir,

"'Your most sorrowful servant,

"'EDWARD BISCUIT.

"'*P.S.*—My master desired, some weeks before he died, that a book, which comes up to you by the carrier, should be given to Sir Andrew Freeport in his name.'

"This letter, notwithstanding the poor butler's manner of writing it, gave us such an idea of our good old friend, that upon the reading of it there was not a dry eye in the club. Sir Andrew opening the book, found it to be a collection of acts of parliament. There was in particular the Act of Uniformity, with some passages in it marked by Sir Roger's own hand. Sir Andrew found that they related to two or three points which he had disputed with Sir Roger the last time he appeared at the club. Sir Andrew, who would have been merry at such an incident on another occasion, at the sight of the old man's hand-writing burst into tears, and put the book into his pocket. Captain Sentry informs me that the knight has left rings and mourning for every one in the club."

I am obliged to give you this ideal of Addison's because I can neither from my own knowledge, nor, at this moment, out of any domestic chronicles I remember, give you so perfect an account of the funeral of an English squire who has lived an honourable life in peace. But Addison is as true as truth itself. So now, meditate over these four funerals, and the meaning and accuracy of the public opinions they express, till I can write again.

And believe me, ever faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

18. A CUTTING was sent me the other day, from a provincial paper, apparently well meant and conducted, but which in its column of "aphorisms," having, unfortunately, ventured to lead off with one on political economy, enunciated itself as follows:—

"All capital comes back at last, though sometimes by a roundabout road, to the pocket of the labourer, in the shape of wages. Consumable produce, however, may be dissipated in a thousand ways, in none of which is either the capitalist or the prolétaire benefited at all."

I don't happen to know, at this moment, what a "prolétaire" is, and can't find it in my French dictionary; but will ascertain by next month,[1] and, meantime, I keep the "aphorism," being a very curious one, for future comment.[2]

19. A letter from a "working woman" has given me much pleasure. She says she does not understand my plans; but can trust me. She may be pleased to know that I don't yet understand some of my plans myself, for they are not, strictly speaking, mine at all, but Nature's and Heaven's, which are not always comprehensible, until one begins to act on them. Then they clear as one goes on, and, I hope, my expression of what I can see of them, for her, and all true workers, will, also.

20. I have an interesting letter from Glasgow, but have not been able to read it yet. A slip of the *Glasgow Chronicle*[3] was enclosed, containing the Editor's opinions on my modes of selling my books. Not having any occasion for his opinions on the subject, I threw the slip into the fire. The letter,[4] which I have just glanced at, says my comparison of the price of my books to a doctor's fee[5] is absurd, for the poor don't pay guinea fees. I know that, and I don't want any poor people to read my

[1] [The derivation is not given in the next letter. According to Littré, Rousseau introduced (*Contrat Social*, iv. 4) the French use of the Latin *proletarius*, derived from *proles* (progeny), and thus signifying a man of the people, who having no property, contributed to the State by his children.]

[2] [For a passage bearing on the subject, see Letter 68, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 674.]

[3] [Really, the *Glasgow Herald:* see below, p. 285.]

[4] [Printed in full in Letter 16, § 12 (pp. 287–290).]

[5] [See Notes and Correspondence as given in the first edition of Letter 14 (above, p. 257 *n.*).]

books. I said so long ago, in *Sesame*.[1] I want them to read these letters, which they can get, each for the price of two pots of beer; and not to read my large books, nor anybody else's, till they are rich enough, at least, to pay for good printing and binding. Even oracular Mr. Grant Duff says they are all to be rich first, and only next to be intelligent,[2] and I am happy in supposing it needs a great deal of intelligence to read *Modern Painters*. But, by the way, if the Editor of the *Glasgow Chronicle* will tell me, why, in these fine manufacturing counties of his, and mine, I can only, with the greatest possible difficulty, or by mere good luck, and help of the Third Fors, now get a quarter of a yard of honest leather to stitch my leaves into, I shall be greatly obliged to him, and will reprint his communication in my best type, instead of throwing it into the fire.[3]

[1] [The reference seems to be to § 32 (Vol. XVIII. p. 86).]
[2] [See Letter 14, § 1 (p. 244).]
[3] [See Letter 16, § 8 (p. 285).]

## LETTER 16

### GOLD GROWING[1]

DENMARK HILL,
*15th March*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—The meditation I asked you to give to the facts put before you in my last letter, if given, should have convinced you for one thing, quite sufficiently for all your future needs, of the unimportance of momentary public opinion respecting the characters of men; and for another thing, of the preciousness of confirmed public opinion, when it happens to be right;—preciousness both to the person opined of, and the opiners;—as, for instance, to Sir Roger de Coverley, the opinion formed of him by his tenants and club: and for third thing, it might have properly led you to consider, though it was scarcely probable your thoughts should have turned that way, what an evil trick of human creatures it was to reserve the expression of these opinions —or even the examination of them, until the persons to be opined of are dead; and then to endeavour to put all right by setting their coffins on baptistery fonts—or hanging them up at Tyburn.[2] Let me very strongly advise you to make up your minds concerning people, while they are with you; to honour and obey those whom you consider good ones; to dishonour and disobey those whom you consider bad ones; and when good and bad ones die, to make no violent or expressive demonstrations of the feelings which have now become entirely useless to the persons concerned, and are only, as they are true or false, serviceable, or the contrary, to yourselves; but to take care that some memorial is kept

[1] [For the title, see below, § 6. "Law, Money, and Literature," "Calligraphy," and "The Alchemist," were rejected titles for this letter.]

[2] [For the reference to Hawkwood, see above, p. 272; to Cromwell, p. 270.]

of men who deserve memory, in a distinct statement on the stone or brass of their tombs, either that they were true men or rascals,—wise men or fools.

How beautiful the variety of sepulchral architecture might be, in any extensive place of burial, if the public would meet the small expense of thus expressing its opinions, in a verily instructive manner; and if some of the tombstones accordingly terminated in fools' caps; and others, instead of crosses or cherubs, bore engravings of cats-of-nine-tails, as typical of the probable methods of entertainment, in the next world, of the persons, not, it is to be hoped, reposing, below.

2. But the particular subject led up to in my last letter, and which, in this special month of April, I think it appropriate for you to take to heart, is the way in which you spend your money, or allow it to be spent for you. Colonel Hawkwood and Colonel Fisk both passed their whole lives in getting possession, by various means, of other people's money (in the final fact, of working-men's money,—yours, that is to say), and everybody praises and crowns them for doing so. Colonel Cromwell passes his life in fighting for, what in the gist of it meant, not freedom, but freedom from unjust taxation;—and you hang his coffin up at Tyburn.

"Not Freedom, but deliverance from unjust taxation." You call me unpractical. Suppose you became practical enough yourselves to take that for a watchword for a little while, and see how near you can come to its realization.

For, I very positively can inform you, the considerablest part of the misery of the world comes of the tricks of unjust taxation. All its evil passions—pride, lust, revenge, malice, and sloth—derive their main deadliness from the facilities of getting hold of other people's money open to the persons they influence. Pay every man for his work,—pay nobody *but* for his work,—and see that the work be sound; and you will find pride, lust, and sloth have little room left for themselves.

3. Observe, however, very carefully, that by unjust

taxation I do not mean merely Chancellor of Exchequer's business, but a great part of what really very wise and worthy gentlemen, but, unfortunately, proud also, suppose to be their business.

For instance, before beginning my letter to you this morning (the last I shall ever date from Denmark Hill*), I put out of my sight, carefully, under a large book, a legal document, which disturbed me by its barbarous black lettering. This is an R

*Fig. 4*

in it, for instance, which is ugly enough, as such;[1] but how ugly in the significance of it, and reasons of its being written that way, instead of in a properly intelligible way, there is hardly vituperation enough in language justly to express to you. This said document is to release the sole remaining executor of my father's will from further responsibility for the execution of it. And all that there is really need for, of English scripture on the occasion, would be as follows:—

I, having received this 15th of March, 1872, from A. B., Esq., all the property which my father left, hereby release

* Between May and October, any letters meant for me should be addressed to Brantwood, Coniston;[2] between October and May, to Corpus Christi College, Oxford. They must be very short, and very plainly written, or they will not be read; and they need never ask me to do anything, because I won't do it. And, in general, I cannot answer letters; but for any that come to help me, the writers may be sure that I am grateful. I get a great many from people who "know that I must be good-natured," from my books. I *was* good-natured once; but I beg to state, in the most positive terms, that I am now old, tired, and very ill-natured.

[1] [For a later reference to this specimen of "eschrography," see Letter 94, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 486).]

[2] [For Ruskin's migration from Denmark Hill in 1872, see Vol. XXII. p. xxv. For circulars printed by Ruskin declining correspondence, see a later volume of this edition.]

A. B., Esq., from future responsibility, respecting either my father's property, or mine, or my father's business, or mine. Signed, J. R., before such and such two witnesses.

This document, on properly cured calf-skin (not cleaned by acids), and written as plainly as, after having contracted some careless literary habits, I could manage to write it, ought to answer the purpose required, before any court of law on earth.

4. In order to effect it in a manner pleasing to the present legal mind of England, I receive eighty-seven lines of close writing, containing from fourteen to sixteen words each (one thousand two hundred and eighteen words in all, at the minimum); thirteen of them in black letters of the lovely kind above imitated, but produced with much pains by the scrivener. Of the manner in which this overplus of one thousand two hundred and seventy-eight words is accomplished (my suggested form containing forty only), the following example—the last clause of the document—may suffice.

"And the said J. R. doth hereby for himself his heirs executors and administrators covenant and agree with and to the said A. B. his executors and administrators that he the said J. R. his heirs executors administrators or assigns shall and will from time to time and at all times hereafter save harmless and keep indemnified the said A. B. his heirs executors administrators and assigns from and in respect of all claims and demands whatsoever which may be made upon him or them or any of them for or in respect of the real or personal estate of the said J. R. and from all suits costs charges and damages and expenses whatsoever which the said A. B. his heirs executors administrators or assigns shall be involved in or put unto for or in respect of the said real or personal estate or any part thereof."[1]

5. Now, what reason do you suppose there is for all this barbarism and bad grammar, and tax upon my eyes and time, for very often one has actually to read these things, or hear them read, all through? The reason is simply and wholly that I may be charged so much per

[1] [This was no doubt the discharge of the executors under the will of Ruskin's father. The will was proved on April 22, 1864, by John Pritchard, of Broseley and Bridgnorth, banker, and John Champley Rutter, gentleman, the surviving executors.]

word, that the lawyer and his clerk may live. But do you not see how infinitely advantageous it would be for me (if only I could get the other sufferers under this black literature to be of my mind) to clap the lawyer and his clerk, once for all, fairly out of the way in a dignified almshouse, with parchment unlimited, and ink turned on at a tap, and maintenance for life, on the mere condition of their never troubling humanity more, with either their scriptures or opinions on any subject; and to have this release of mine, as above worded, simply confirmed by the signature of any person whom the Queen might appoint for that purpose (say the squire of the parish), and there an end? How is it, do you think, that other sufferers under the black literature, do *not* come to be of my mind, which was Cicero's mind also,[1] and has been the mind of every sane person before Cicero and since Cicero,—so that we might indeed get it ended thus summarily?

6. Well, at the root of all these follies and iniquities, there lies always one tacit, but infinitely strong persuasion in the British mind, namely, that somehow money grows out of nothing, if one can only find some expedient to produce an article that must be paid for. "Here," the practical Englishman says to himself, "I produce, being capable of nothing better, an entirely worthless piece of parchment, with one thousand two hundred entirely foolish words upon it, written in an entirely abominable hand; and by this production of mine, I conjure out of the vacant air, the substance of ten pounds, or the like. What an infinitely profitable transaction to me and to the world! Creation, out of a chaos of words, and a dead beast's hide, of this beautiful and omnipotent ten pounds. Do I not see with my own eyes that this is very good?"[2]

[1] [The reference is to Cicero, *Pro Murena*, where (§ 23), of the legal forms of the jurisconsult, he says, "isdem ineptiis fucata sunt illa omnia"; and, again (§ 26), "inanissima prudentiæ . . . fraudis autem et stultitiæ plenissima," and (*ibid.*) "itaque, ut dixi, dignitas in ista scientia nunquam fuit, quæ tota ex rebus fictis commenticiisque constaret."]

[2] [Genesis i. 10: "God saw that it was good."]

That is the real impression on the existing popular mind; silent, but deep, and for the present unconquerable. That by due parchment, calligraphy, and ingenious stratagem, money may be conjured out of the vacant air. Alchemy is, indeed, no longer included in our list of sciences, for alchemy proposed,—irrational science that it was,—to make money of *something*;—gold of lead, or the like. But to make money of *nothing*,—this appears to be manifoldly possible, to the modern Anglo-Saxon practical person,—instructed by Mr. John Stuart Mill. Sometimes, with rare intelligence, he is capable of carrying the inquiry one step farther. Pushed hard to assign a Providential cause for such legal documents as this we are talking of, an English gentleman would say: "Well, of course, where property needs legal forms to transfer it, it must be in quantity enough to bear a moderate tax without inconvenience; and this tax on its transfer enables many well-educated and agreeable persons to live."

Yes, that is so, and I (speaking for the nonce in the name of the working man, maker of property) am willing enough to be taxed, straightforwardly, for the maintenance of these most agreeable persons; but not to be taxed obliquely for it, nor teased, either obliquely or otherwise, for it. I greatly and truly admire (as aforesaid, in my first letter[1]) these educated persons in wigs; and when I go into my kitchen-garden in spring time, to see the dew on my early sprouts, I often mentally acknowledge the fitness, yet singularity, of the arrangement by which I am appointed to grow mute Broccoli for the maintenance of that talking Broccoli. All that I want of it is to let itself be kept for a show, and not to tax my time as well as my money.

7. Kept for a show, of heads; or, to some better purpose, for writing on fair parchment, with really well-trained hands, what might be desirable of literature. Suppose every existing lawyer's clerk was trained, in a good drawing

[1] [Letter 1, § 6 (p. 17).]

school, to write red and blue letters as well as black ones, in a loving and delicate manner; here for instance is an R and a number eleven, which begin the eleventh chapter of Job[1] in one of my thirteenth-century Bibles. There is as good a letter and as good a number—every one different in design,—to every chapter, and beautifully gilded and painted ones to the beginning of books; all done for love, and teasing nobody. Now suppose the lawyers' clerks, thus instructed

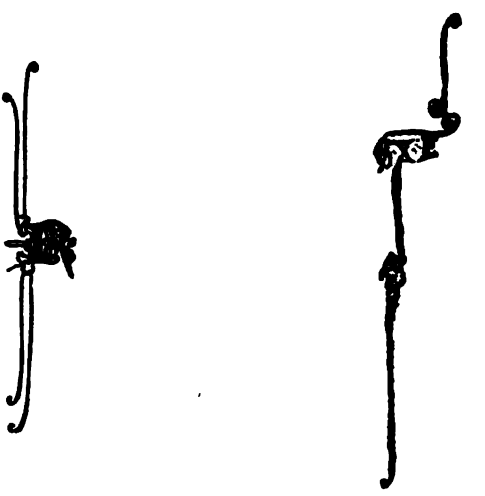

*Fig. 5*

to write decently, were appointed to write for us, for their present pay, words really worth setting down—Nursery Songs, Grimm's Popular Stories, and the like,—we should have again, not, perhaps, a cheap literature; but at least an innocent one. Dante's words might then be taken up literally by relieved mankind. "Più ridon le carte."[2] "The papers smile more," they might say, of such transfigured legal documents.[3]

8. Not a cheap literature, even then; nor pleasing to my

[1] ["Respondens autem Zophar." The letters are from a Bible now in the Ruskin Museum at Sheffield (see Vol. XXIX. p. 50). For another reference to them, see Letter 94, § 7 (*ibid.* p. 486).]

[2] [*Purgatorio*, xi. 82.]

[3] [Compare Letter 64, § 22 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 579), where Ruskin refers to this passage.]

friend the *Glasgow Herald*, who writes to me indignantly, but very civilly (and I am obliged to him), to declare that he is a Herald, and not a Chronicle. I am delighted to hear it; for my lectures on heraldry are just beginning at Oxford,[1] and a Glaswegian opinion may be useful to me, when I am not sure of my blazon. Also he tells me good leather may be had in Glasgow.[2] Let Glasgow flourish,[3] and I will assuredly make trial of the same: but touching this cheap literature question, I cannot speak much in this letter, for I must keep to our especial subject of April—this Fools' Paradise of Cloud-begotten Gold.

Cloud-begotten—and self-begotten—as some would have it. But it is not so, friends.

9. Do you remember the questioning to Job? The pretty letter R stopped me just now at the Response of Zophar;[4] but look on to the thirty-eighth chapter, and read down to the question concerning this April time: —"Hath the rain a Father—and who hath begotten the drops of dew,—the hoary Frost of Heaven—who hath gendered it?"[5]

That rain and frost of heaven; and the earth which they loose and bind: these, and the labour of your hands to divide them, and subdue, are your wealth, for ever—unincreasable. The fruit of Earth, and its waters, and its light—such as the strength of the pure rock can grow—such as the unthwarted sun in his season brings—these are your inheritance. You can diminish it, but cannot increase: that your barns should be filled with plenty—your presses burst with new wine,[6]—is your blessing; and every year—when it is full—it must be new; and every year, no more.

[1] ["The Heraldic Ordinaries," Lecture X. of *The Eagle's Nest*, delivered March 9, 1872. He gave no connected course of lectures on heraldry; but, in addition to the lecture above mentioned, referred frequently to the subject in the course published under the title of *Val d'Arno:* see below, Letter 18, § 14 (p. 315). "Lectures on Heraldry" would also apply to his drawing classes, with their heraldic examples: see Vol. XXI.]

[2] [See Letter 15, § 20 (p. 277).]

[3] ["Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of the Word" (the motto of the City of Glasgow).]

[4] [Job xi.] [5] [Job xxxviii. 28–29.] [6] [Proverbs iii. 10.]

10. And this money, which you think so multipliable, is only to be increased in the hands of some, by the loss of others. The sum of it, in the end, represents, and *can* represent, only what is in the barn and winepress. It may represent less, but cannot more.

These ten pounds, for instance, which I am grumbling at having to pay my lawyer—what are they? whence came they?

They were once (and could be nothing now, unless they had been) so many skins of Xeres wine[1]—grown and mellowed by pure chalk rock and unafflicted sunshine. Wine drunk, indeed, long ago—but the drinkers gave the vineyard dressers these tokens, which we call pounds, signifying, that having had so much good from them they would return them as much, in future time. And, indeed, for my ten pounds, if my lawyer didn't take it, I could still get my Xeres, if Xeres wine exists anywhere. But, if not, what matters it how many pounds I have, or think I have, or you either? It is meat and drink we want—not pounds.

11. As you are beginning to discover—I fancy too many of you, in this rich country. If you only would discover it a little faster, and demand dinners, instead of Liberty! For what possible liberty do you want, which does not depend on dinner? Tell me, once for all, what is it you want to do, that you can't do? Dinner being provided, do you think the Queen will interfere with the way you choose to spend your afternoons, if only you knock nobody down, and break nobody's windows? But the need of dinner enslaves you to purpose!

12. On reading the letter spoken of in my last correspondence sheet,[2] I find that it represents this modern form of slavery with an unconscious clearness, which is very interesting. I have, therefore, requested the writer's

[1] [Ruskin refers to his money as inherited from his father, for whose business as a sherry-merchant, see Letter 56 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 385–386); compare, above, p. 63.]

[2] [See above, p. 276.]

permission to print it, and with a passage or two omitted, and briefest comment, here it is in full type, for it is worth careful reading:—

"GLASGOW, 12*th February*, 1872.

"SIR,—You say in your *Fors* that you do not want any one to buy your books who will not give a 'doctor's fee' per volume, which you rate at 10s. 6d.;[1] now, as the *Herald* remarks, you are clearly placing yourself in a wrong position, as you arbitrarily fix *your* doctor's fee far too high; indeed, while you express a desire, no doubt quite sincerely, to elevate the working man, morally, mentally, and physically, you in the meantime absolutely preclude him from purchasing your books at all, and so almost completely bar his way from the enjoyment and elevating influence of perhaps the most" [etc., complimentary terms —omitted].

"Permit me a personal remark:—I am myself a poorly paid clerk, with a salary not much over the income-tax minimum; now no doctor, here at least, would ever think of charging me a fee of 10s. 6d., and so you see it is as much out of my power to purchase your books as any working man. While Mr. Carlyle is just now issuing a cheap edition of his Works at 2s. per volume, which I can purchase, here, quite easily for 1s. 6d." [Presumably, therefore, to be had, as far north as Inverness, for a shilling, and for sixpence in Orkney], "I must say it is a great pity that a writer so much, and, in my poor opinion, justly, appreciated as yourself, should as it were inaugurate with your own hands a system which thoroughly barriers your productions from the great majority of the middle and working classes. I take leave, however, to remark that I by no means shut my eyes to the anomalies of the Bookselling Trade, but I can't see that it can be remedied by an Author becoming his own Bookseller, and, *at the same*

[1] [See above, p. 257 *n.*]

*time*, putting an unusually high price on his books. Of course, I would like to see an Author remunerated as highly as possible for his labours." [You ought not to like any such thing: you ought to like an author to get what he deserves, like other people, not more, nor less.] "I would also crave to remark, following up your unfortunate analogy of the doctor's fee, that doctors who have acquired, either professionally or otherwise, a competence, often, nay very often, give their advice gratis to nearly every class, except that which is really wealthy; at least, I speak from my own experience, having known, nay even been attended by, such a benevolent physician in a little town in Kirkcudbrightshire, who when offered payment, and I was both quite able and willing to do so, and he was in no way indebted or obliged to me or mine, positively declined to receive any fee. So much for the benevolent physician and his fees.

"Here am I, possessed of a passionate love of nature in all her aspects, cooped up in this fearfully crammed mass of population, with its filthy Clyde, which would naturally have been a noble river, but, under the curse of our much belauded civilization, forsooth, turned into an almost stagnant loathsome ditch, pestilence-breathing, be-lorded over by hundreds upon hundreds of tall brick chimney-stacks vomiting up smoke unceasingly; and from the way I am situated, there are only one day and a half in the week in which I can manage a walk into the country; now, if I wished to foster my taste for the beautiful in nature and art, even while living a life of almost servile red-taped routine beneath the too frequently horror-breathing atmosphere of a huge over-grown plutocratic city like Glasgow, I cannot have your Works" [complimentary terms again], "as, after providing for my necessaries, I cannot indulge in books at 10s. 6d. a volume. Of course, as you may say" [My dear sir, the very last thing I should say[1]], "I can get them from

[1] [For Ruskin's dislike of circulating libraries, see Vol. XVIII. p. 86. Compare also Letter 34 (below, p. 646); and Letter 73, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 16).]

a library. Assuredly, but one (at least I would) wishes to have actual and ever-present possession of productions such as yours" [more compliments]. "You will be aware, no doubt, that 'Geo. Eliot' has adopted a 'new system' in publishing her new novel[1] by issuing it in 5s. 'parts,' with the laudable view of enabling and encouraging readers to buy the work for themselves, and not trusting to get it from some 'Mudie' or another for a week, then galloping through the three volumes and immediately forgetting the whole matter. When I possess a book worth having I always recur to it now and again. *Your* 'new system,' however, tends to prevent the real reading public from ever possessing your books, and the wealthy classes who could afford to buy books at 10s. 6d. a volume, as a rule, I opine, don't drive themselves insane by much reading of any kind.

"I beg a last remark and I've done. Glasgow, for instance, has increased in wealth till I believe there are some of the greatest merchants in the world trading in her Exchange; but has no splendid public buildings except her grand old Cathedral, founded by an almost-forgotten bishop in the twelfth century, in what we in our vain folly are pleased to call the dark ages, when we ourselves are about as really dark as need be; having no 'high calling' to strive for, except by hook or by crook to make money—a fortune—retire at thirty-five by some stroke of gambling of a highly questionable kind on the *Share* market or otherwise, to a suburban or country villa with Turkey carpets, a wine-cellar and a carriage and pair; as no man nowadays is ever content with making a decent and honest *livelihood.* Truly a very 'high calling'! Our old Cathedral, thank God, was not built by contract or stock-jobbing: there was, surely, a higher calling of some sort in those quiet, old, unhurrying days. Our local plutocratic friends put their hands into their pockets to the extent of £150,000 to help to build our new University buildings after a design by G. Gilbert

[1] [*Middlemarch*, thus published 1871–1872; *Daniel Deronda* was similarly published 1874–1876.]

Scott, which has turned out a very imposing pile of masonry; at least, it is placed on an imposing and magnificent site. I am no prophet, but I should not wonder if old St. Mungo's Cathedral, erected nearly six hundred years ago to the honour and glory of God, will be standing a noble ruin when our new spick-and-span College is a total wreck after all,—such being the difference between the work of really earnest God-fearing men, and that done by contract and Trades' Unions. The Steam Engine, one of the demons of our mad, restless, headlong civilization, is screaming its unearthly whistle in the very quadrangles of the now deserted, but still venerable College buildings in our High Street, almost on the very spot where the philosophic Professors of that day, to their eternal honour, gave a harbourage to James Watt, when the narrow-minded guild-brethren of Glasgow expelled him from their town as a stranger craftsman hailing from Greenock. Such is the irony of events! Excuse the presumption of this rather rambling letter, and apologizing for addressing you at such length, "I am, very faithfully yours."

13. I have only time, just now, to remark on this letter first, that I don't believe any of Mr. Scott's work is badly done,[1] or will come down soon; and that Trades' Unions are quite right when honest and kind: but the frantic mistake of the Glaswegians, in thinking that they can import learning into their town safely in a Gothic case, and have 150,000 pounds' worth of it at command, while they have banished for ever from their eyes the sight of all that mankind have to learn anything *about*, is,—Well—as the rest of our enlightened public opinion. They might as well put a pyx into a pigsty, to make the pigs pious.

In the second place, as to my correspondent's wish to read my books, I am entirely pleased by it; but, putting the question of fee aside for the nonce, I am not in the least minded, as matters stand, to prescribe my books for

[1] [Compare above, p. 190.]

him. Nay, so far as in me lies, he shall neither read them, nor learn to trust in any such poor qualifications and partial comforts of the entirely wrong and dreadful condition of life he is in, with millions of others. If a child in a muddy ditch asked me for a picture-book, I should not give it him; but say, "Come out of that first; or, if you cannot, I must go and get help; but picture-books, there, you shall have none!"

Only a day and a half in the week on which one can get a walk in the country (and how few have as much, or anything like it!), just bread enough earned to keep one alive, on those terms—one's daily work asking not so much as a lucifer match's worth of human intelligence;—unwholesome besides—one's chest, shoulders, and stomach getting hourly more useless. Smoke above for sky, mud beneath for water; and the pleasant consciousness of spending one's weary life in the pure service of the devil! And the blacks are emancipated over the water there—and this is what you call "having your own way," *here*, is it?

Very solemnly, my good clerk-friend, there is something to be *done* in this matter; not merely to be read. Do you know any honest men who have a will of their own, among your neighbours? If none, set yourself to seek for such; if any, commune with them on this one subject, how a man may have sight of the Earth he was made of, and his bread out of the dust of it—and peace! And find out what it is that hinders you now from having these, and resolve that you will fight it, and put end to it. If you cannot find out for yourselves, tell me your difficulties, briefly, and I will deal with them for you, as the Second Fors may teach me. Bring you the First with you, and the Third will help us.[1]

And believe me, faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] ["Fors here:—Courage—Patience—Fortune."—*MS. note in Author's copy* (referring to the last letter, § 14, p. 270). Ruskin says "here," because later in the book he sometimes subdivides "Fortune" into the three Fates, and speaks of *them* as the first, second, or third "Fors": see the Introduction, above, p. xxi.]

## LETTER 17

### THE SWORD OF ST. GEORGE[1]

FLORENCE,
1st *May*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—Have you thought, as I prayed you to think,[2] during the days of April, what things they are that will hinder you from being happy on this first of May? Be assured of it, you are meant, to-day, to be as happy as the birds, at least. If you are not, you, or somebody else, or something that you are one or other responsible for, is wrong; and your first business is to set yourself, them, or it, to rights. Of late you have made that your last business; you have thought things would right themselves, or that it was God's business to right them, not yours. Peremptorily it is yours. Not, observe, to get your rights, but to put things to rights. Some eleven in the dozen of the population of the world are occupied earnestly in putting things to wrongs, thinking to benefit themselves thereby. Is it any wonder, then, you are uncomfortable, when already the world, in our part of it, is over-populated, and eleven in the dozen of the over-population doing diligently wrong; and the remaining dozenth expecting God to do their work for them; and consoling themselves with buying two-shilling publications for eighteenpence?[3]

2. To put things to rights! Do you not know how refreshing it is even to put one's room to rights, when it has got dusty and decomposed? If no other happiness is

[1] [See below, § 7. "The Sword of St. George and his School" and "Marmontel" were rejected titles.]
[2] [See the last words of the preceding letter.]
[3] [See above, p. 287.]

to be had, the mere war with decomposition is a kind of happiness. But the war with the Lord of Decomposition, the old Dragon himself,—St. George's war, with a princess to save, and win[1]—are none of you, my poor friends, proud enough to hope for any part in that battle? Do you conceive no figure of any princess for May Queen; or is the definite dragon turned into indefinite cuttlefish, vomiting black venom into the waters of your life; or has he multiplied himself into a host of pulicarious dragons—bug-dragons, insatiable as unclean,—whose food you are, daily?

3. St. George's war! Here, since last May, when I engraved Giotto's Hope for you,[2] have I been asking whether any one would volunteer for such battle? Not one human creature, except a personal friend or two, for mere love of me, has answered.[3]

Now, it is true, that my writing may be obscure, or seem only half in earnest. But it is the best I can do: it expresses the thoughts that come to me as they come; and I have no time just now to put them into more intelligible words. And, whether you believe them or not, they are entirely faithful words: I have no interest at all to serve by writing, but yours.[4]

And, literally, no one answers. Nay, even those who read, read so carelessly that they don't notice whether the book is to go on or not.

Heaven knows: but it shall, if I am able, and what I undertook last May, be fulfilled, so far as the poor faculty or time left me may serve.

4. Read over, now, the end of that letter for May last, from "To talk at a distance," in page 86.

I have given you the tenth of all I have, as I promised. I cannot, because of those lawyers I was talking of last

[1] [See *St. Mark's Rest*, Vol. XXIV. pp. 377 *seq.*]
[2] [Letter 5, frontispiece.]
[3] [For the first List of Subscriptions to St. George's Fund, see below, p. 678.]
[4] [Compare the like claim made at the end of the preface to the closing volume of *Modern Painters*, Vol. VII. p. 10.]

instead of the wise stealing, of money. Now it literally happened that before the White Company went into Italy, there was an Italian Company called "of St. George," which was afterwards incorporated with Sir John's of the burnished armour; and another company, called "of the Rose," which was a very wicked and destructive one.[1] And within my St. George's Company,—which shall be of persons still following their own business, wherever they are, but who will give the tenth of what they have, or make,[2] for the purchase of land in England, to be cultivated by hand, as aforesaid, in my last May number,[3]—shall be another company, not destructive, called of "Monte Rosa," or "Mont Rose,"[4] because Monte Rosa is the central mountain of the range between north and south Europe, which keeps the gift of the rain of heaven. And the motto, or watch-word of this company is to be the old French "Mont-joie."[5] And they are to be entirely devoted, according to their power, first to the manual labour of cultivating pure land, and guiding of pure streams and rain to the places where they are needed:[6] and secondly, together with this manual labour, and much by its means, they are to carry on the thoughtful labour of true education, in themselves, and of others. And they are not to be monks nor nuns; but are to learn, and teach all fair arts, and sweet order and obedience of life; and to educate the children entrusted to their schools in such practical arts and patient obedience; but not at all, necessarily, in either arithmetic, writing, or reading.[7]

That is my design, romantic enough, and at this day difficult enough: yet not so romantic, nor so difficult as

[1] [For some notice of these companies of *Condottieri*, see Sismondi, ch. lviii. (vol. viii.); and for the relations between Hawkwood and the St. George's Company, ch. viii. of the Life of *Sir John Hawkwood* by John Temple-Leader and G. Marcotti (1889).]

[2] [See above, p. 95 *n.*]

[3] [See Letter 5, § 20 (p. 95).]

[4] [For other references to the proposed "Company of Mont Rose," see below, pp. 354, 365 *n.*, 416.]

[5] [Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 185 (Vol. XXIII. p. 111).]

[6] [For Ruskin's constant interest in this subject, see Vol. XVII. pp. 61, 97, 270, 547–552; and Vol. XIX. p. lvii.]

[7] [For a later reference to the exclusion of the three R's, see Letter 94, § 2 (Vol. XXIX. p. 479).]

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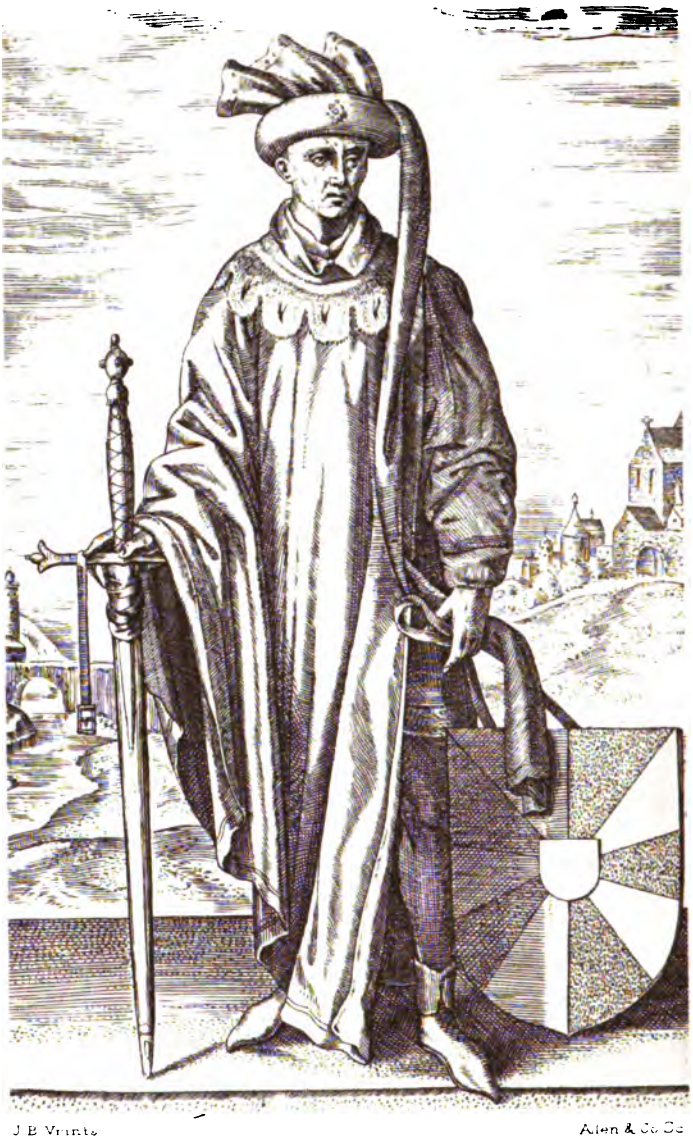

Robert, Count of Flanders, called "The Son of St. George."

your now widely and openly proclaimed design, of making the words "obedience" and "loyalty"* to cease from the English tongue.

7. That same number of the *Republican* which announced that all property must be taken under control,[1] was graced by a frontispiece, representing, figuratively, "Royalty in extremis"; †[2] the joyful end of Rule, and of every strength of Kingship; Britannia, having, perhaps, found her waves of late unruly, declaring there shall be no rule over the land neither. Some day I may let you compare this piece of figurative English art with Giotto's; but, meantime, since, before you look so fondly for the end of Royalty, it is well that you should know somewhat of its beginnings, I have given you a picture[3] of one of the companions in the St. George's Company of all time, out of a pretty book, published at Antwerp, by John Baptist Vrints, cutter of figures in copper, on the 16th April, 1598; and giving briefly the stories, and, in no unworthy imagination, the pictures also, of the first "foresters" (rulers of woods and waves‡)

* Observe that loyalty, in this and other such places, means fidelity to law, and therefore to the king as its supreme administrator.—*Index to Vols. I. and II.*

† "Royalty, or rule, expiring state of, according to modern republicanism. See 'Kings'; and observe generally 'Royalty' means rule of any kind; 'Monarchy,' rule by a single person; 'Kingship,' rule by an able and wise person. See 'Lycurgus.'"—*Note in Index to Vols. I. and II.*

‡ "Davantage, ilz se nommoyent Forestiers, non que leur charge et gouvernement fust seulement sur la terre, qui estoit lors occupee et empeschee de la forest Charbonniere, mais la garde de la mer leur estoit aussi commise. Convient ici entendre, que ce terme, forest, en vieil bas Aleman, convenoit aussi bien aux eaux comme aux boys, ainsi qu'il est narré es memoires de Jehan du Tillet."—*Les Genealogies des Forestiers et Comtes de Flandres,* Ant$^{p}$. 1598.[4]

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[1] [See Letters 13, § 6, and 14, § 2 (pp. 233, 245).]

[2] [A roughly drawn cartoon (not a frontispiece, but on p. 3) of a decrepit king, with a figure of Death with a scythe behind him. Ruskin did not reproduce the cartoon.]

[3] [Plate VI. (originally placed as frontispiece to this letter).]

[4] [*Les Genealogies et Anciennes Descentes des Forestiers et Comtes de Flandres . . . par Corneille Martin . . . et Ornees de Portraicts figures et habitz selon les facons et grives de leurs temps, ainsi qu'elles ont este trouvees es plus anciens tableaux, par Pierre Balthasar, et par lui mesme mises en lumiere, en Anvers chez Jean Baptist Vrints.* The date is 16 April 1598. Ruskin quotes in the text from p. 74; in the note, from p. 4. The first and choicer edition of this rare book was issued in 1580.]

in Flanders, where the waves once needed, and received, much ruling; and of the Counts of Flanders who succeeded them, of whom this one, Robert, surnamed "of Jerusalem," was the eleventh, and began to reign in 1077; being "a virtuous, prudent, and brave prince" who,—having first taken good order in his money affairs, and ended some unjust claims his predecessors had made on church property, and established a perpetual chancellorship and legal superintendence over his methods of revenue,—took the cross against the infidels, and got the name, in Syria, for his prowess, of the "Son of St. George."

So he stands, leaning on his long sword—a man desirous of setting the world to rights, if it might be; but not knowing the way of it, nor recognizing that the steel with which it can be done, must take another shape than that double-edged one.

And from the eleventh century to this dull nineteenth, less and less the rulers of men have known their weapon. So far, yet, are we from beating sword into ploughshare,[1] that now the sword is set to undo the plough's work when it has been done; and at this hour the ghastliest ruin of all that moulder from the fire, pierced through black rents by the unnatural sunlight above the ashamed streets of Paris, is the long skeleton, and roofless hollow of the "Grenier d'Abondance."[2]

8. Such Agriculture have we contrived here, in Europe, and ploughing of new furrows for graves. Will you hear how Agriculture is now contrived in America?—where, since you spend your time here in burning corn, you must send to buy it; trusting, however, still to your serviceable friend the Fire, as here to consume, so there, to sow and reap, for repairing of consumption. I have just received

[1] [Isaiah ii. 4; Micah iv. 3—words often quoted by Ruskin; see, for instance, Vol. XVII. p. 178 *n.*]

[2] ["The greatest conflagration to-day was that of the Grenier d'Abondance. The flames and smoke from it rose high over the city" (*Times*, May 26, 1871, in an account of the burning of Paris by the Commune). Ruskin refers to this incident in *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 223.]

a letter from California, which I trust the writer will not blame me for printing:[1]—

*March 1st*, 1872.

"SIR,—You have so strongly urged 'agriculture by the hand' that it may be of some interest to you to know the result thus far of agriculture by machinery, in California. I am the more willing to address you on this subject from the fact that I may have to do with a new Colony in this State, which will, I trust, adopt, as far as practicable, your ideas as to agriculture by the hand. Such thoughts as you might choose to give regarding the conduct of such a Colony here would be particularly acceptable; and should you deem it expedient to comply with this earnest and sincere request, the following facts may be of service to you in forming just conclusions.

"We have a genial climate and a productive soil. Our farms ('ranches') frequently embrace many thousands of acres, while the rule is, scarcely ever less than hundreds of acres. Wheat-fields of 5000 acres are by no means uncommon, and not a few of above 40,000 acres are known. To cultivate these extensive tracts much machinery is used, such as steam-ploughs, gang-ploughs, reaping, mowing, sowing, and thrashing machines; and seemingly to the utter extermination of the spirit of home, and rural life. Gangs of labourers are hired during the emergency of harvesting; and they are left for the most part unhoused, and are also fed more like animals than men. Harvesting over, they are discharged, and thus are left near the beginning of our long and rainy winters to shift for themselves. Consequently the larger towns and cities are infested for months with idle men and boys. Housebreaking and highway robbery are of almost daily occurrence. As to the farmers themselves, they live in a dreamy, comfortless way, and are mostly without education or refinement. To show them how to live better and cleaner; to give them nobler aims than merely to raise wheat for the English market; to teach them the history of those five cities,[2] and 'their girls to cook exquisitely,' etc.,[3] is surely a mission for earnest men in this country, no less than in England, to say nothing of the various accomplishments to which you have alluded. I have caused to be published in some of our farming districts many of the more important of your thoughts bearing on these subjects, and I trust with beneficial results.

"I trust I shall not intrude on Mr. Ruskin's patience if I now say something by way of thankfulness for what I have received from your

[1] [The receipt of this letter gave Ruskin much pleasure. In a note to Mrs. Arthur Severn from Oxford (March 29, 1872) he says:—

"I opened, ten minutes after the last glimpse of you yesterday, a most precious letter from a man in California. He had been a sailor before the mast; found *Modern Painters* in an island in the Pacific! then read all my books, and is now trying to carry out *Fors Clavigera* in California. It is all very wonderful and beautiful.

"Then, this morning I opened at 37th Ezekiel, and read it—it seemed as if just spoken to me—and then, by as utter chance, the 16th Psalm."]

[2] [Athens, Rome, Venice, Florence, and London: see Letter 8, § 10 (p. 143).]

[3] [*Ibid.*]

works.* I know not certainly if this will ever reach you. If it does, it may in some small way gladden you to know that I owe to your teaching almost all the good I have thus attained. A large portion of my life has been spent at sea, and in roaming in Mexico, Central and South America, and in the Malaysian and Polynesian Islands. I have been a sailor before and abaft the mast. Years ago I found on a remote island of the Pacific the *Modern Painters;* after them the *Seven Lamps of Architecture;* and finally your complete works. Ignorant and uncultivated, I began earnestly to follow certain of your teachings. I read most of the books you recommended, simply because you seemed to be my teacher; and so in the course of these years I have come to believe in you about as faithfully as one man ever believes in another. From having no fixed object in life I have finally found that I have something to do, and will ultimately, I trust, have something to say about sea-life, something that has not, I think, hitherto been said—if God ever permits me the necessary leisure from hard railway work, the most hopeless and depressing of all work I have hitherto done. "Your most thankful servant,

———."

9. With the account given in the first part of this letter of the results of mechanical agriculture in California, you shall now compare a little sketch by Marmontel of the peasant life, not mechanical, in his own province. It is given, altering only the name of the river, in the *Contes Moraux*,[1] in the story, professing to continue that of Molière's *Misanthrope:*—

"Alceste, discontented as you know, both with his mistress and with his judges, decided upon flying from men, and retired very far from Paris to the banks of the Vologne; this river, in which the shells enclose pearl, is yet more precious by the fertility which it causes to spring on its borders; the valley that it waters is one beautiful meadow. On one side of it rise smiling hills, scattered all over with woods and villages, on the other extends a vast level of fields covered with corn. It was there that Alceste went to live, forgotten by all, free from cares, and from irksome duties; entirely his own, and finally delivered from the odious spectacle of the world, he breathed freely, and praised heaven for having broken all his chains. A little study, much exercise, pleasures not vivid, but

* I accept the blame of vanity in printing the end of this letter, for the sake of showing more perfectly the temper of its writer, whom I have answered privately; in case my letter may not reach him, I should be grateful if he would send me again his address.

[1] [Ruskin here translates the beginning of the story: see vol. iii. pp. 245–254, 1st ed. 1765, of the *Contes Moraux*. "The Misanthrope Corrected" in *Marmontel's Moral Tales, selected with a Revised Translation*, by George Saintsbury (George Allen, 1895), pp. 390 *seq.* A later passage from the same story is given in Letter 40, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 62).]

untroubled; in a word, a life peacefully active, preserved him from the ennui of solitude: he desired nothing, and regretted nothing. One of the pleasures of his retreat was to see the cultivated and fertile ground all about him nourishing a peasantry, which appeared to him happy. For a misanthrope who has become so by his virtue, only thinks that he hates men, because he loves them. Alceste felt a strange softening of the heart mingled with joy at the sight of his fellow-creatures rich by the labour of their hand. 'Those people,' said he, 'are very happy to be still half savage. They would soon be corrupted if they were more civilized.' As he was walking in the country, he chanced upon a labourer who was ploughing, and singing as he ploughed. 'God have a care of you, my good man!' said he, 'you are very gay?' 'I mostly am,' replied the peasant. 'I am happy to hear it: that proves that you are content with your condition.' 'Until now, I have good cause to be.' 'Are you married?' 'Yes, thank heaven.' 'Have you any children?' 'I *had* five. I have lost one, but that is a mischief that may be mended.' 'Is your wife young?' 'She is twenty-five years old.' 'Is she pretty?' 'She is, for me, but she is better than pretty, she is good.' 'And you love her?' '*If* I love her! Who would not love her! I wonder?' 'And she loves you also, without doubt.' 'Oh! for that matter, with all her heart—just the same as before marriage.' 'Then you loved each other before marriage?' 'Without that, should we have let ourselves be caught?' 'And your children—are they healthy?' 'Ah! it's a pleasure to see them! The eldest is only five years old, and he's already a great deal cleverer than his father; and for my two girls, never was anything so charming! It'll be ill-luck indeed if *they* don't get husbands. The youngest is sucking yet, but the little fellow will be stout and strong. Would you believe it?—he beats his sisters when they want to kiss their mother!—he's always afraid of anybody's taking him from the breast.' 'All that is, then, very happy?' 'Happy! I should think so—you should see the joy there is when I come back from my work! You would say they hadn't seen me for a year. I don't know which to attend to first. My wife is round my neck—my girls in my arms—my boy gets hold of my legs—little Jeannot is like to roll himself off the bed to get to me—and I, I laugh, and cry, and kiss all at once—for all that makes me cry!' 'I believe it, indeed,' said Alceste. 'You *know* it, sir, I suppose, for you are doubtless a father?' 'I have not that happiness.' 'So much the worse for you! There's nothing in the world worth having, but that.'[1] 'And how do you live?' 'Very well: we have excellent bread, good milk, and the fruit of our orchard. My wife, with a little bacon, makes a cabbage soup that the King would be glad to eat! Then we have eggs from the poultry-yard; and on Sunday we have a feast, and drink a little cup of wine.' 'Yes, but when the year is bad?' 'Well, one expects the year to be bad, sometimes, and one lives on what one has saved from the good years.' 'Then there's the rigour of the weather—the cold and the rain, and the heat—that you have to bear.' 'Well! one gets used to it; and if you only knew the pleasure that one has in the evening, in getting the cool breeze after a day of summer; or, in winter, warming one's hands at the blaze of a good faggot, between one's

[1] [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 48 (Vol. XIX. p. 99), where Ruskin cites these words. See also Appendix 6, Vol. XXIX. p. 538.]

## LETTER 18

### VAL DI NIÉVOLE[1]

PISA, *29th April*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—You would pity me, if you knew how seldom I see a newspaper, just now; but I chanced on one yesterday, and found that all the world was astir about the marriage of the Marquis of B.,[2] and that the Pope had sent him, on that occasion, a telegraphic blessing of superfine quality.

I wonder what the Marquis of B. has done to deserve to be blessed to that special extent, and whether a little mild beatitude, sent here to Pisa, might not have been better spent. For, indeed, before getting hold of the papers, I had been greatly troubled, while drawing the east end of the Duomo,[3] by three fellows who were leaning against the Leaning Tower, and expectorating loudly and copiously, at intervals of half a minute each, over the white marble base of it, which they evidently conceived to have been constructed only to be spit upon.[4] They were all in rags, and obviously proposed to remain in rags all their days, and pass what leisure of life they could obtain, in spitting. There was a boy with them, in rags also, and not less expectorant, but having some remains of human activity in him still (being not more than twelve years old); and he was even a little interested in my brushes

[1] [See below, § 2. A rejected title was "Benediction and Usury (or taxation)."]

[2] [The marriage of the Marquis of Bute is again referred to in Letter 20, § 5 (p. 337). John Patrick, sixth Earl and third Marquis of Bute (1847–1900), married April 16, 1872, the Hon. Gwendoline Howard, daughter of Lord Howard of Glossop. His entrance into the Roman Catholic Church is the subject of Disraeli's *Lothair*.]

[3] [The drawing is reproduced on Plate III. in Vol. XXIII.]

[4] [For an English parallel, see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 89 (Vol. XX. p. 260).]

and colours, but rewarded himself, after the effort of some attention to these, by revolving slowly round the iron railing in front of me like a pensive squirrel. This operation at last disturbed me so much, that I asked him if there were no other railings in Pisa he could turn upside down over, but these. "Sono cascato, Signor—" "I tumbled over them, please, Sir," said he, apologetically, with infinite satisfaction in his black eyes.

Now it seemed to me that these three moist-throated men and the squirrelline boy stood much more in need of a paternal blessing than the Marquis of B.—a blessing, of course, with as much of the bloom off it as would make it consistent with the position in which Providence had placed them; but enough, in its moderate way, to bring the good out of them instead of the evil. For there was all manner of good in them, deep and pure—yet for ever to be dormant; and all manner of evil, shallow and superficial, yet for ever to be active and practical, as matters stood that day, under the Leaning Tower.

2. *Lucca, 7th May.*—Eight days gone, and I've been working hard, and looking my carefullest; and seem to have done nothing, nor begun to see these places, though I've known them thirty years, and though Mr. Murray's Guide says one may see Lucca, and its Ducal Palace and Piazza, the Cathedral, the Baptistery, nine churches, and the Roman amphitheatre, and take a drive round the ramparts, in the time between the stopping of one train and the starting of the next.[1]

I wonder how much time Mr. Murray would allow for the view I had to-day, from the tower of the Cathedral, up the valley called of "Niévole,"[2]—now one tufted softness of fresh springing leaves, far as the eye can reach. You know something of the produce of the hills that bound it, and perhaps of its own: at least, one used to see

[1] [See Vol. XXV. p. 115.]

[2] [For other reference to this region, see in a later volume of this edition, the "Notes on the Life of S. Zita" in *Roadside Songs of Tuscany*.]

"Fine Lucca Oil" often enough in the grocers' windows (petroleum has, I suppose, now taken its place), and the staple of Spitalfields was, I believe, first woven with Lucca thread.[1]

3. The actual manner of production of these good things is thus:—The Val di Niévole is some five miles wide by thirty long, and is simply one field of corn or rich grass land, undivided by hedges; the corn two feet high, and more, to-day. Quite Lord Derby's style of agriculture,[2] you think? No; not quite. Undivided by hedges, the fields are yet meshed across and across by an intricate network of posts and chains. The posts are maple-trees, and the chains, garlands of vine. The meshes of this net each enclose two or three acres of the corn-land, with a row of mulberry-trees up the middle of it, for silk. There are poppies, and bright ones too, about the banks and roadsides; but the corn of Val di Niévole is too proud to grow with poppies, and is set with wild gladiolus instead, deep violet.[3] Here and there a mound of crag rises out of the fields, crested with stone-pine, and studded all over with the large stars of the white rock-cistus. Quiet streams, filled with close crowds of the golden waterflag, wind beside meadows painted with purple orchis. On each side of the great plain is a wilderness of hills, veiled at their feet with a grey cloud of olive woods; above, sweet with glades of chestnut; peaks of more distant blue, still, to-day, embroidered with snow, are rather to be thought of as vast precious stones than mountains,

[1] [Ruskin was here probably thinking of a passage in Gibbon (ch. liii.): "In the year 1314 Lucca alone, among her sister republics, enjoyed the lucrative monopoly (of silk). A domestic revolution dispersed the manufacturers to Florence, Bologna, Venice, Milan, and even the countries beyond the Alps, and thirteen years after this event, the statutes of Modena enjoin the planting of mulberry-trees, and regulate the duties on raw silk. The northern climates are less propitious to the education of the silkworm; but the industry of France and England is supplied and enriched by the productions of Italy and China." The brood silk manufacture was established in England in 1620; but it is to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) that we owe the Spitalfields colony of silk-weavers. There was a colony of Lucchese in London in mediæval times: see below, p. 312 *n.*]

[2] [See Letter 10, § 1 (p. 166).]

[3] [Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 186 (Vol. XXIII. p. 111.)]

for all the state of the world's palaces has been hewn out of their marble.[1]

4. I was looking over all this from under the rim of a large bell,[2] beautifully embossed, with a St. Sebastian upon it, and some lovely thin-edged laurel leaves, and an inscription saying that the people should be filled with the fat of the land,[3] if they listened to the voice of the Lord. The bell-founder of course meant, by the voice of the Lord, the sound of his own bell; and all over the plain, one could see towers rising above the vines voiced in the same manner. Also much trumpeting and fiddling goes on below, to help the bells, on holy days; and, assuredly, here is fat enough of land to be filled with, if listening to these scrapings and tinklings were indeed the way to be filled.

The laurel leaves on the bell were so finely hammered that I felt bound to have a ladder set against the lip of it, that I might examine them more closely; and the sacristan and bell-ringer were so interested in this proceeding that they got up, themselves, on the cross-beams, and sat like two jackdaws, looking on, one on each side; for which expression of sympathy I was deeply grateful, and offered the bell-ringer, on the spot, two bank-notes for tenpence each. But they were so rotten with age, and so brittle and black with tobacco, that, having unadvisedly folded them up small in my purse, the patches on their backs had run their corners through them, and they came out tattered like so much tinder. The bell-ringer looked at them hopelessly, and gave me them back. I promised him some better patched ones, and folded the remnants of tinder up carefully, to be kept at Coniston (where we have still a tenpenceworth or so of copper,—though no olive oil) —for specimens of the currency of the new Kingdom of Italy.

[1] ["Carrara Hills."—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]
[2] [At Lucca Cathedral: see below, p. 400.]
[3] [Genesis xlv. 18.]

Such are the monuments of financial art, attained by a nation which has lived in the fattest of lands for at least three thousand years, and for the last twelve hundred of them has had at least some measure of Christian benediction, with help from bell, book, candle, and, recently, even from gas.

5. Yet you must not despise the benediction, though it has not provided them with clean bank-notes. The peasant race, at least, of the Val di Niévole are not unblest; if honesty, kindness, food sufficient for them, and peace of heart, can anywise make up for poverty in current coin. Only the evening before last, I was up among the hills to the south of Lucca, close to the remains of the country-house of Castruccio Castracani, who was Lord of the Val di Niévole, and much good land besides, in the year 1828 (and whose sword, you perhaps remember, was presented to the King of Sardinia, now King of Italy, when first he visited the Lucchese after driving out the old Duke of Tuscany; and Mrs. Browning wrote a poem upon the presentation[1]); a Neapolitan Duchess has got his country-house now, and has restored it to her taste. Well, I was up among the hills, that way, in places where no English, nor Neapolitans either, ever dream of going, being altogether lovely and at rest, and the country life in them unchanged; and I had several friends with me, and among them one of the young girls who were at Furness Abbey last year;[2] and, scrambling about among the vines, she lost a pretty little cross of Florentine work. Luckily, she had made acquaintance, only the day before, with the peasant mistress of a cottage close by, and with her two youngest children, Adam and Eve. Eve was still tied up tight in swaddling clothes, down to the toes, and carried about as a

[1] ["The Sword of Castruccio Castracani." For Castruccio Castracani, Duke of Lucca, see Vol. XII. pp. 224–225; and for other references to the gift of his sword by the people of Lucca to King Victor Emanuel, see Vol. XIX. p. 441, and Vol. XXIII. p. 472.]

[2] [See Letter 11, § 3 (p. 182). Mrs. and Miss Hilliard were among Ruskin's travelling companions at this time.]

bundle; but Adam was old enough to run about; and found the cross, and his mother gave it us back next day.[1]

Not unblest, such a people, though with some common human care and kindness you might bless them a little more. If only you would not curse them; but the curse of your modern life is fatally near, and only for a few years more, perhaps, they will be seen—driving their tawny kine, or with their sheep following them,—to pass, like pictures in enchanted motion, among their glades of vine.

6. *Rome, 12th May.*—I am writing at the window of a new inn,[2] whence I have a view of a large green gas-lamp, and of a pond, in rustic rock-work, with four large black ducks in it; also of the top of the Pantheon; sundry ruined walls; tiled roofs innumerable; and a palace about a quarter of a mile long, and the height, as near as I can guess, of Folkestone cliffs under the New Parade; all which I see to advantage over a balustrade veneered with an inch of marble over four inches of cheap stone, carried by balusters of cast iron, painted and sanded, but with the rust coming through,—this being the proper modern recipe in Italy for balustrades which may meet the increasing demand of travellers for splendour of abode. (By the way, I see I can get a pretty little long vignette view of the roof of the Pantheon, and some neighbouring churches, through a chink between the veneering and the freestone.)

7. Standing in this balcony, I am within three hundred yards of the greater Church of St. Mary, from which Castruccio Castracani walked to St. Peter's on 17th January, 1328, carrying the sword of the German Empire, with which he was appointed to gird its Emperor, on his taking possession of Rome, by Castruccio's help, in spite of the Pope. The Lord of the Val di Niévole wore a dress of superb damask silk, doubtless the best that the worms of

[1] [For another reference to this incident, see *Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence*, § 66 (Vol. XXIII. p. 233).]

[2] [The description shows that the inn must have been one of those overlooking the Quirinal; probably the Hôtel d'Italie in the Via delle Quattro Fontane.]

Lucca mulberry-trees could spin; and across his breast an embroidered scroll, inscribed, "He is what God made him," and across his shoulders, behind, another scroll, inscribed, "And he shall be what God will make."[1]

On the 3rd of August, that same year, he recovered Pistoja from the Florentines, and rode home to his own Lucca in triumph, being then the greatest war-captain in Europe, and Lord of Pisa, Pistoja, Lucca, half the coast of Genoa, and three hundred fortified castles in the Apennines;[2] on the 3rd of September he lay dead in Lucca, of fever. "Crushed before the moth;"[3] as the silkworms also, who were boiled before even they became so much as moths,[4] to make his embroidered coat for him. And, humanly speaking, because he had worked too hard in the trenches of Pistoja, in the dog-days, with his armour on, and with his own hands on the mattock, like the good knight he was.

8. Nevertheless, his sword was no gift for the King of Italy, if the Lucchese had thought better of it. For those three hundred castles of his were all Robber-castles, and he, in fact, only the chief captain of the three hundred thieves who lived in them. In the beginning of his career these "towers of the Lunigiana belonged to gentlemen who had made brigandage in the mountains, or piracy on the sea, the sole occupation of their youth. Castruccio united them round him, and called to his little court all the exiles and adventurers who were wandering from town to town, in search of war or pleasures."*

And, indeed, to Professors of Art, the Apennine between

* SISMONDI: *History of Italian Republics*, Vol. III., Chap. ii.[5]

[1] [See Villani's *Istorie Fiorentine*, book x. ch. lviii. (vol. vi. p. 83, Milan edition of 1803), and Sismondi's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*, ch. xxxi. (vol. v. p. 152, Paris edition of 1826).]

[2] [Villani, book x. ch. lxxxv. (vol. vi. pp. 119–120).]

[3] [Job iv. 19.]

[4] [For the manufacture of silk, the eggs of the silkworm, called *graine*, are hatched out by artificial heat when the mulberry leaves are ready for the feeding of the larvæ. Subsequently, the pupa is killed to prevent its further progress and the bursting of the shell by the fully developed moth.]

[5] [Ruskin used the fifth (French) edition of 1838, published at Brussels. The reference is to vol. v. p. 76, in the Paris edition of 1826.]

Lucca and Pistoja is singularly delightful to this day, because of the ruins of these robber-castles on every mound, and of the pretty monasteries and arcades of cloister beside them. But how little we usually estimate the real relation of these picturesque objects! The homes of Baron and Clerk, side by side, established on the hills. Underneath, in the plain, the peasant driving his oxen. The Baron lives by robbing the peasant, and the Clerk by blessing the Baron.

9. Blessing and absolving, though the Barons of grandest type could live, and resolutely die, without absolution. Old Straw-Mattress of Evilstone,* at ninety-six, sent his son from beside his death-mattress to attack the castle of the Bishop of Arezzo, thinking the Bishop would be off his guard, news having gone abroad that the grey-haired Knight of Evilstone[1] could sit his horse no more. But, usually, the absolution was felt to be needful towards the end of life; and if one thinks of it, the two kinds of edifices on the hill-tops may be shortly described as those of the Pillager and Pardoner, or Pardonere, Chaucer's word being classical in spelling, and the best general one for the clergy of the two great Evangelical and Papal sects. Only a year or two ago, close to the Crystal Palace, I heard in the Rev. Mr. Tipple's chapel another Pardoner announce from his pulpit that there was no thief, nor devourer of widows' houses,[2] nor any manner of sinner, in his congregation that day, who might not leave the church an entirely pardoned and entirely respectable person, if he would only believe—what the Rev. Pardoner was about to announce to him.[3]

* "Saccone of Pietra-mala."

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[1] [Compare Letter 69, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 688). For the incident (in 1356) here noted by Ruskin, see Matteo Villani, book vi. chaps xi., xvi.; and Sismondi, Paris edition of 1826, ch. xlv. (vol. vi. pp. 304 *seq.*).]

[2] [Matthew xxiii. 14.]

[3] ["In the first edition the piece of teaching was attributed to the incumbent of the chapel. The error was corrected by his letter, printed in the correspondence of Letter 20" (p. 350).—*Author's MS. note in his own copy.* See the Bibliographical Note, above, p. cix.]

10. Strange, too, how these two great pardoning religions agree in the accompaniment of physical filth. I have never been hindered from drawing street subjects by pure human stench, but in two cities,—Edinburgh and Rome.

There are some things, however, which Edinburgh and London pardon, nowadays, which Rome would not. Penitent thieves, by all means, but not impenitent; still less impenitent peculators.

11. Have patience a little, for I must tell you one or two things more about Lucca: they are all connected with the history of Florence, which is to be one of the five cities[1] you are to be able to give account of; and, by the way, remember at once, that her florin in the fourteenth century was of such pure gold that when in Chaucer's "Pardonere's Tale" Death puts himself into the daintiest dress he can, it is into a heap of "floreines faire and bright."[2] He has chosen another form at Lucca; and when I had folded up my two bits of refuse tinder,[3] I walked into the Cathedral to look at the golden lamp which hangs before the Sacred Face—twenty-four pounds of pure gold in the lamp: Face of wood: the oath of kings, since William Rufus' days;[4] carved eighteen hundred years ago, if one

[1] [Athens, Rome, Venice, Florence, and London: see Letter 8, § 10 (p. 143).]
[2] [Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 117 (Vol. XXIII. p. 71).]
[3] [See above, § 4.]
[4] [The Volto Santo, which is preserved in a chapel built by Matteo Civitali, is a cedar-wood crucifix about 13 feet in length. It is said to have been carved by Nicodemus, and while he slept an angel carved the face. In 782 it was discovered to a pilgrim bishop from Piedmont, Gualfredo by name, who, instructed by an angel, put it on board an empty bark at Joppa. The bark was guided to Luni, where, at the time of its arrival, was Giovanni, Bishop of Lucca. It was agreed that the crucifix should be placed on a cart drawn by two white oxen, and that, wherever they went, it should remain. The oxen went straight to Lucca, and "there it has ever since remained, working great wonders, and drawing to this day vast crowds of pilgrims from all corners of the Catholic world." It is exposed to view on the Festivals of the Holy Cross, May 3 and September 14, and on the anniversary of the curation of a plague, in December. Mediæval Englishmen had a great devotion to the Volto Santo. William of Malmesbury records that the Red King habitually swore "per sanctum vultum de Luca" (compare Vol. X. p. 451 *n.*), and in an old London church of St. Thomas there was an effigy of the Volto Santo, the cult of which was cared for by the Lucchese colony. See Canon Almerico Guerra's *Notizie Storiche del Volto Santo di Lucca* (Lucca, 1881), and Montgomery Carmichael's *In Tuscany*, 1901, where, at p. 154, is a reproduction from a drawing of the upper portion of the crucifix. A lamp of gold was offered by the people of Lucca at the outbreak of cholera in 1836.]

would believe, and very full of pardon to faithful Lucchese; yet, to some, helpless.

12. There are, I suppose, no educated persons in Italy, and few in England, who do not profess to admire Dante; and, perhaps, out of every hundred of these admirers, three or four may have read the bit about Francesca di Rimini, the death of Ugolino, and the description of the Venetian Arsenal.[1] But even of these honestly studious three or four we should rarely find one, who knew why the Venetian Arsenal was described. You shall hear, if you will:—

"As, in the Venetian Arsenal, the pitch boils in the winter time, wherewith to caulk their rotten ships . . . so, not by fire, but divine art, a thick pitch boiled there, beneath, which had plastered itself all up over the banks on either side. But in it I could see nothing, except the bubbles that its boiling raised, which from time to time made it all swell up over its whole surface, and presently fell back again depressed. And as I looked at it fixedly, and wondered, my guide drew me back hastily, saying, 'Look, look!' . . . And when I turned, I saw behind us, a black devil come running along the rocks. Ah, how wild his face! ah, how bitter his action as he came with his wings wide, light upon his feet! On his shoulder he bore a sinner, grasped by both haunches; and when he came to the bridge foot, he cried down into the pit: 'Here's an ancient[2] from Lucca; put him under, that I may fetch more, for the land is full of such; there, for money, they make "No" into "Yes" quickly.' And he cast him in and turned back, —never mastiff fiercer after his prey. The thrown sinner plunged in the pitch, and curled himself up; but the devils from under the bridge cried out, 'There's no holy face here; here one swims otherwise than in the Serchio.' And they caught him with their hooks and pulled him under, as cooks do the meat in broth; crying, 'People play here hidden; so that they may filch in secret, if they can.'"

13. Doubtless, you consider all this extremely absurd, and are of opinion that such things are not likely to happen in the next world. Perhaps not; nor is it clear that Dante believed they would; but I should be glad if you would tell me what you think *is* likely to happen there. In the meantime, please to observe Dante's figurative meaning, which is by no means absurd. Every one of

[1] [*Inferno*, v., xxxiii., and xxi. (lines 7-9, 16-23, 29-53, being here translated and partly summarised, by Ruskin).]

[2] [Ruskin in his copy here writes, "Note needed"; it may be explained, therefore, that the reference is to the Elders, or chief Magistrates, of the city.]

his scenes has symbolic purpose, down to the least detail. This lake of pitch is the love of money, which, in our own vulgar English phrase, "sticks to people's fingers"; it clogs and plasters its margin all over, because the mind of a man bent on dishonest gain makes everything within its reach dirty; it bubbles up and down, because underhand gains nearly always involve alternate excitement and depression; and it is haunted by the most cruel and indecent of all the devils, because there is nothing so mean, and nothing so cruel, but a peculator will do it. So you may read every line figuratively, if you choose: all that I want is, that you should be acquainted with the opinions of Dante concerning peculation. For with the history of the five cities, I wish you to know also the opinions, on all subjects personally interesting to you, of five people who lived in them; namely, of Plato, Virgil, Dante, Victor Carpaccio (whose opinions I must gather for you from his paintings,[1] for painting is the way Venetians write), and Shakespeare.

14. If, after knowing these five men's opinions on practical matters (these five, as you will find, being all of the same mind), you prefer to hold Mr. J. S. Mill's and Mr. Fawcett's opinions, you are welcome. And indeed I may as well end this by at once examining some of Mr. Fawcett's statements on the subject of Interest, that being one of our chief modern modes of peculation; but before we put aside Dante for to-day, just note farther this, that while he has sharp punishment for thieves, forgers, and peculators,—the thieves being changed into serpents,[2] the forgers covered with leprosy,[3] and the peculators boiled in pitch,[4]—he has no punishment for bad workmen; no Tuscan mind at that day being able to conceive such a ghastly sin as a man's doing bad work

[1] [See Letter 71, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 732).]
[2] [*Inferno*, xxiv. 94 *seq.*]
[3] [*Ibid.*, xxix. 75 *seq.*]
[4] [*Ibid.*, xxi. 7 *seq.*]

wilfully; and, indeed, I think the Tuscan mind, and in some degree the Piedmontese, retain some vestige of this old temper; for though, not a fortnight since (on 3rd May), the cross of marble in the arch-spandril next the east end of the Chapel of the Thorn at Pisa was dashed to pieces before my eyes,[1] as I was drawing it for my class in heraldry at Oxford,[2] by a stone-mason, that his master might be paid for making a new one, I have no doubt the new one will be as honestly like the old as master and man can make it; and Mr. Murray's Guide will call it a "judicious restoration." So also, though here, the new Government is digging through the earliest rampart of Rome (*agger* of Servius Tullius), to build a new Finance Office,[3] which will doubtless issue tenpenny notes in Latin, with the dignity of *denarii* (the "pence" of your New Testament), I have every reason to suppose the new Finance Office will be substantially built, and creditable to its masons (the veneering and cast-iron work being, I believe, done mostly at the instigation of British building companies). But it seems strange to me that, coming to Rome for quite other reasons, I should be permitted by the Third Fors to see the *agger* of Tullius cut through, for the site of a Finance Office, and his Mons Justitiæ (Mount of Justice), presumably the most venerable piece of earth in Italy, carted away, to make room for a railroad station of Piccola Velocità. For Servius Tullius was the first king who stamped money with the figures of animals,[4] and introduced a word among the Romans with the sound of which Englishmen are also now acquainted, "pecunia."

[1] [See also Letter 20, § 20 (p. 348); and compare *Val d'Arno*, § 43 (Vol. XXIII. p. 33).]

[2] [See above, p. 285 n.]

[3] [In the Via Venti Settembre. The excavations for this building disclosed the exact position of the ancient Porta Viminalis (see Middleton's *Remains of Ancient Rome*, 1892 edition, vol. i. p. 133). The Mons Justitiæ was close by; for a note on later discoveries made at the site, see p. 46 of the Introduction to Murray's *Handbook to Rome* (1894 edition).]

[4] [See Pliny, xxxiii., 13: "Servius rex primus signavit æs. . . . Signatum est nota pecudum, unde et pecunia appellata."]

Moreover, it is in speaking of this very *agger* of Tullius that Livy explains in what reverence the Romans held the space between the outer and inner walls of their cities,[1] which modern Italy delights to turn into a Boulevard.

15. Now then, for Mr. Fawcett:—

At the 146th page of the edition of his *Manual* previously quoted,[2] you will find it stated that the interest of money consists of three distinct parts:

1. Reward for abstinence.
2. Compensation for the risk of loss.
3. Wages for the labour of superintendence.

I will reverse this order in examining the statements; for the only real question is as to the first, and we had better at once clear the other two away from it.

16. (3.) Wages for the labour of superintendence.

By giving the capitalist *wages* at all, we put him at once into the class of labourers, which in my November letter I showed you is partly right;[3] but, *by Mr. Fawcett's definition*, and in the broad results of business, he is *not* a labourer. So far as he is one, of course, like any other, he is to be paid for his work. There is no question but that the partner who superintends any business should be paid for superintendence; but the question before us is only respecting *payment for doing nothing*. I have, for instance, at this moment £15,000 of Bank Stock, and receive £1200 odd, a year, from the Bank, but I have never received the slightest intimation from the directors that they wished for my assistance in the superintendence of that establishment;—(more shame for them). But even in cases where the partners are active, it does not follow that the one who has most money in the business is either

[1] [Livy, book i. ch. xliv.: "Aggere et fossis et muro circumdat urbem: ita pomerium profert. Pomerium verbi vim solam intuentes postmerium interpretantur esse: est autem magis circa mœrum locus," etc.]

[2] [See Letter 11, § 8, p. 188: "The last edition of Professor Fawcett's *Manual of Political Economy* (Macmillan, 1869)."]

[3] [*Ibid.*]

fittest to superintend it, or likely to do so; it is indeed probable that a man who has made money already will know how to make more; and it is necessary to attach some importance to property as the sign of sense: but your business is to choose and pay your superintendent for his sense, and not for his money. Which is exactly what Mr. Carlyle has been telling you for some time;[1] and both he and all his disciples entirely approve of interest, if you are indeed prepared to define that term as payment for the exercise of common-sense spent in the service of the person who pays for it. I reserve yet awhile, however, what is to be said, as hinted in my first letter, about the sale of ideas.[2]

17. (2.) Compensation for risk.

Does Mr. Fawcett mean by "compensation for risk," protection from it, or reward for running it? Every business involves a certain quantity of risk, which is properly covered by every prudent merchant, but he does not expect to make a profit out of his risks, nor calculate on a percentage on his insurance. If he prefer not to insure, does Professor Fawcett mean that his customers ought to compensate him for his anxiety; and that while the definition of the first part of interest is extra payment for prudence, the definition of the second part of interest is extra payment for *im*prudence? Or, does Professor Fawcett mean, what is indeed often the fact, that interest for money represents such reward for risk as people may get across the green cloth at Homburg[3] or Monaco? Because so far as what used to be business is, in modern political economy, gambling, Professor Fawcett will please to observe that what one gamester gains another loses. You cannot get anything out of Nature, or from God, by gambling;—only out of your neighbour: and to

[1] [As in *Past and Present*, with its precepts about "captains of industry" and "apportionment of wages to work done."]

[2] [See Letter 1, § 14 (p. 26).]

[3] [The Prussian Government, however, closed the gaming establishments at Homburg in this very year (1872).]

## LETTER 19

### RAIN ON THE ROCK[1]

VERONA, *18th June*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—What an age of progress it is, by help of advertisements! No wonder you put some faith in them, friends. In summer, one's work is necessarily much before breakfast; so, coming home tired to-day, I order a steak, with which is served to me a bottle of "Moutarde Diaphane," from Bordeaux.

What a beautiful arrangement have we here! Fancy the appropriate mixture of manufactures of cold and hot at Bordeaux—claret, and diaphanous mustard! Then the quantity of printing and proclamation necessary to make people in Verona understand that diaphanous mustard is desirable, and may be had at Bordeaux. Fancy, then, the packing, and peeping into the packages; and porterages, and percentages on porterages; and the engineering, and the tunnelling, and the bridge-building, and the steam whistling, and the grinding of iron, and raising of dust in the Limousin (Marmontel's country[2]), and in Burgundy, and in Savoy, and under the Mont Cenis, and in Piedmont, and in Lombardy, and at last over the field of Solferino, to fetch me my bottle of diaphanous mustard!

And to think that, besides paying the railway officers all along the line, and the custom-house officers at the frontier, and the original expenses of advertisement, and the profits of its proprietors, my diaphanous mustard paid a

[1] [For the title, see §§ 8, 16. "Diaphanous Mustard" and "'Cast thy Bread upon the Waters'; or, The Thunder-shower" were rejected titles.]

[2] [See above, p. 251. Marmontel's home was near Limoges, the capital of the ancient province, or government, of Limousin.]

dividend to somebody or other, all the way here! I wonder it is not more diaphanous by this time!

2. An age of progress, indeed, in which the founding of my poor St. George's Company, growing its own mustard, and desiring no dividends, may well seem difficult. I have scarcely had courage yet to insist on that second particular, but will try to find it, on this Waterloo day.

Observe, then, once for all, it is to be a company for Alms-Giving, not for dividend-getting. For I still believe in Alms-Giving, though most people nowadays do not, but think the only hopeful way of serving their neighbour is to make a profit out of him. I am of opinion, on the contrary, that the hopefullest way of serving him is to let *him* make a profit out of *me*, and I only ask the help of people who are at one with me in that mind.

Alms-giving, therefore, is to be our function; yet alms only of a certain sort. For there are bedesmen and bedesmen, and our charities must be as discriminate as possible.

3. For instance, those two steely and stalwart horsemen, who sit, by the hour, under the two arches opposite Whitehall, from ten to four per diem, to receive the public alms.[1] It is their singular and well-bred manner of begging, indeed, to keep their helmets on their heads, and sit erect on horseback; but one may, with slight effort of imagination, conceive the two helmets held in a reversed manner, each in the mouth of a well-bred and politely-behaving dog, Irish greyhound, or the like; sitting erect, it also, paws in air, with the brass instead of copper pan in its mouth, plume downwards, for reception of pence.

"Ready to fight for us, they are, on occasional 18ths of June."

Doubtless, and able-bodied;—barons of truest make:[2] but I thought your idea of discriminate charity was to give rather to the sick than the able-bodied? and that you have

[1] [Compare above, p. 185.]
[2] [See above, p. 262.]

that it won't, or can't, help *you?* But are you content so? For that is the essential condition of the whole business—I will not speak of it in terms of money—are you content to give work? Will you build a bit of wall, suppose—to serve your neighbour, expecting no good of the wall yourself? If so, you must be satisfied to build the wall for the man who wants it built; you must not be resolved first to be sure that he is the best man in the village. Help any one, anyhow you can: so, in order, the greatest possible number will be helped; nay, in the end, perhaps, you may get some shelter from the wind under your charitable wall yourself; but do not expect it, nor lean on any promise that you shall find your bread again, once cast away; I can only say that of what I have chosen to cast fairly on the waters[1] myself, I have never yet, after any number of days, found a crumb. Keep what you want; cast what you can,—and expect nothing back, once lost, or once given.

7. But for the actual detail of the way in which benefit might thus begin, and diffuse itself, here is an instance close at hand. Yesterday a thunder-shower broke over Verona in the early afternoon: and in a quarter of an hour the streets were an inch deep in water over large spaces, and had little rivers at each side of them. All these little rivers ran away into the large river—the Adige, which plunges down under the bridges of Verona, writhing itself in strong rage: for Verona, with its said bridges, is a kind of lock-gate upon the Adige, half open—lock-gate on the ebbing rain of all the South Tyrolese Alps. The little rivers ran into it, not out of the streets only, but from all the hillsides; millions of sudden streams. If you look at Charles Dickens's letter about the rain in Glencoe, in Mr. Forster's Life of him,[2] it will give you a better idea of the

[1] [Ecclesiastes xi. 1.]

[2] [*The Life of Charles Dickens*, vol. i. pp. 246–247 (ch. xvi.). Ruskin in his copy of *Fors* wrote here, "Add note on Dickens' storm at Steerforth and Tennyson's Brook." "At Steerforth," *i.e.*, the description of the gale in which James Steerforth perished (*David Copperfield*, ch. lv.). Ruskin praises this description in a note in

kind of thing than I can, for my forte is really not description, but political economy.—Two hours afterwards the sky was clear, the streets dry,—the whole thunder-shower was in the Adige, ten miles below Verona, making the best of its way to the sea, after swelling the Po a little (which is inconveniently high already),—and I went out with my friends to see the sun set clear, as it was likely to do, and did, over the Tyrolese mountains.

8. The place fittest for such purpose is a limestone crag about five miles nearer the hills, rising out of the bed of a torrent, which, as usual, I found a bed only; a little washing of the sand into moist masses here and there being the only evidence of the past rain.

Above it, where the rocks were dry, we sat down, to draw, or to look; but I was too tired to draw, and cannot any more look at a sunset with comfort, because, now that I am fifty-three, the sun seems to me to set so horribly fast; when one was young, it took its time; but now it always drops like a shell,[1] and before I can get any image of it, is gone, and another day with it.

So, instead of looking at the sun, I got thinking about the dry bed of the stream, just beneath. Ugly enough it was; cut by occasional inundation irregularly out of the thick masses of old Alpine shingle, nearly every stone of it the size of an ostrich-egg. And, by the way, the average size of shingle in given localities is worth your thinking about, geologically. All through this Veronese plain the stones are mostly of ostrich-egg size and shape; some forty times as big as the pebbles of English shingle (say of the Addington Hills), and not flat nor round; but resolvedly oval. Now there is no reason, that I know of, why large mountains should break into large pebbles, and small ones into small; and indeed the consistent reduction of our own masses of flint, as big as a cauliflower, leaves and all, into

*Frondes Agrestes* (see Vol. III. p. 570 *n.*). Of Tennyson's "The Brook," he says elsewhere that it "is far beyond anything I ever did, or could have done in beauty of description" (Vol. IV. p. 355).]

[1] ["Bomb" shell "meant."—*Author's note in his copy.*]

the flattish rounded pebble, seldom wider across than half a crown, of the banks of Addington, is just as strange a piece of systematic reduction as the grinding of Monte Baldo into sculpture of ostrich-eggs:—neither of the processes, observe, depending upon questions of time, but of method of fracture.

9. The evening drew on, and two peasants who had been cutting hay on a terrace of meadow among the rocks, left their work, and came to look at the sketchers, and make out, if they could, what we wanted on their ground. They did not speak to us, but bright light came into the face of one, evidently the master, on being spoken to, and excuse asked of him for our presence among his rocks, by which he courteously expressed himself as pleased, no less than (though this he did not say)—puzzled.

Some talk followed, of cold and heat, and anything else one knew the Italian for, or could understand the Veronese for (Veronese being more like Spanish than Italian); and I praised the country, as was just, or at least as I could, and said I should like to live there. Whereupon he commended it also, in measured terms; and said the wine was good. "But the water?" I asked, pointing to the dry river-bed. The water was bitter, he said, and little wholesome. "Why, then, have you let all that thunder-shower go down the Adige, three hours ago?" "That was the way the showers came." "Yes, but not the way they ought to go." (We were standing by the side of a cleft in the limestone which ran down through ledge after ledge, from the top of the cliff, mostly barren; but my farmer's man had led two of his grey oxen to make what they could of supper from the tufts of grass on the sides of it, half-an-hour before.) "If you had ever been at the little pains of throwing half-a-dozen yards of wall here, from rock to rock, you would have had, at this moment, a pool of standing water as big as a mill-pond, kept out of that thunder-shower, which very water, to-morrow morning, will probably be washing away somebody's hay-stack into the Po."

The above was what I wanted to say; but didn't know the Italian for hay-stack. I got enough out to make the farmer understand what I meant.

10. Yes, he said, that would be very good, but "la spesa?"

"The expense! What would be the expense to you of gathering a few stones from this hillside? And the idle minutes, gathered out of a week, if a neighbour or two joined in the work, could do all the building." He paused at this—the idea of neighbours joining in work appearing to him entirely abortive, and untenable by a rational being.[1] Which indeed, throughout Christendom, it at present is,—thanks to the beautiful instructions and orthodox catechisms impressed by the two great sects of Evangelical and Papal pardoneres[2] on the minds of their respective flocks—(and on their lips also, early enough in the lives of the little bleating things. "Che cosa è la fede?"[3] I heard impetuously interrogated of a seven years' old one, by a conscientious lady in a black gown and white cap, in St. Michael's at Lucca, and answered in a glib speech a quarter of a minute long). Neither have *I* ever thought of, far less seriously proposed, such a monstrous thing as that neighbours should help one another; but I *have* proposed, and do solemnly still propose, that people who have got no neighbours, but are outcasts and Samaritans, as it were, should put whatever twopenny charity they can afford into useful unity of action; and that, caring personally for no one, practically for every one, they should undertake "la spesa" of work that will pay no dividend on their twopences; but will both produce and pour oil and wine[4] where they are most wanted. And I do solemnly propose that the St. George's Company in England, and (please the

[1] [Compare what Ruskin heard in a similar sense at Bellinzona (Vol. XVII. p. 97 *n.*); and on the subject of inundations generally, compare *ibid.*, pp. 547–552.]

[2] [See above, Letter 18, § 9 (p. 311).]

[3] [Compare Letters 20, § 19, and 22, § 5 (below, pp. 347, 375).]

[4] [See Luke x. 34.]

University of Padua[1]) a St. Anthony's Company in Italy, should positively buy such bits of barren ground as this farmer's at Verona, and make the most of them that agriculture and engineering can.

VENICE, *23rd June.*

11. My letter will be a day or two late, I fear, after all; for I can't write this morning, because of the accursed whistling of the dirty steam-engine of the omnibus for Lido, waiting at the quay of the Ducal Palace for the dirty population of Venice, which is now neither fish nor flesh, neither noble nor fisherman;—cannot afford to be rowed, nor has strength nor sense enough to row itself; but smokes and spits up and down the piazzetta all day, and gets itself dragged by a screaming kettle to Lido next morning, to sea-bathe itself into capacity for more tobacco.[2]

12. Yet I am grateful to the Third Fors for stopping my revise; because just as I was passing by Padua yesterday I chanced upon this fact, which I had forgotten (do me the grace to believe that I knew it twenty years ago), in Antonio Caccianiga's *Vita Campestre.** "The Venetian Republic founded in Padua"—(wait a minute; for the pigeons are come to my window-sill and I must give them some breakfast)—"founded in Padua, 1765, the first chair

* Second Edition, Milan, 1870. (FRATELLI RECHIADEI), p. 86.[3]

[1] [St. Anthony being the Saint of Padua, and the University of Padua (§ 12) having been the seat of the first chair of rural economy. Ruskin's own note of explanation in his copy is "pigs"; but this indispensable element in rural economy is the symbol of St. Anthony the hermit, not of St. Anthony of Padua. Compare Letter 26, § 10 *n.* (p. 482 *n.*). In Letter 17, § 6 (p. 296), Ruskin proposed a Company of Monte Rosa.]

[2] [Here in Rawdon Brown's copy of *Fors* (in the Marciana Library at Venice) are pasted in copies of *Il Tempo* (13 Luglio 1872) and *Il Rinnovamento* (14 Luglio), quoting from the *Gazzetta d'Italia* (12 Luglio) an Italian translation of § 11 ("I can't write . . . tobacco") and § 12 ("This miserable mob . . . Palace quay"). The passages are erroneously described in the Italian papers as being from a letter addressed by Ruskin to a private correspondent. *La Stampa* (17 Luglio) heads an article on the subject "Un Accesso di Spleen," and it is suggested that the "miserable mob" consists more of visitors than of Venetians.]

[3] [At p. 42, in ed. 1 of 1867.]

of rural economy appointed in Italy, annexed to it a piece of ground destined for the study, and called Peter Ardouin, a Veronese botanist, to honour the school with his lectures."

Yes; that is all very fine; nevertheless, I am not quite sure that rural economy, during the 1760 years previous, had not done pretty well without a chair, and on its own legs. For, indeed, since the beginning of those philosophies in the eighteenth century, the Venetian aristocracy has so ill prospered that instead of being any more able to give land at Padua, it cannot so much as keep a poor acre of it decent before its own Ducal Palace, in Venice; nor hinder this miserable mob (which has not brains enough to know so much as what o'clock it is, nor sense enough so much as to go aboard a boat without being whistled for, like dogs) from choking the sweet sea air with pitch-black smoke, and filling it with entirely devilish noise, which no properly bred human being could endure within a quarter of a mile of them—that so they may be sufficiently assisted and persuaded to embark, for the washing of themselves, at the Palace quay.

18. It is a strange pass for things to have reached, under politic aristocracies and learned professors; but the policy and learning became useless, through the same kind of mistake on both sides. The professors of botany forgot that botany, in its original Greek, meant a science of things to be *eaten*;[1] they pursued it only as a science of things to be *named*. And the politic aristocracy forgot that their own "bestness" consisted essentially in their being fit—in a figurative manner—to be eaten: and fancied rather that their superiority was of a titular character, and that the beauty and power of their order lay wholly in being fit to be—named.

14. I must go back to my wall-building, however, for a minute or two more, because you might probably think

[1] [*βοτάνη* (*βόσκω*) meaning *grass*, fodder. On "the science of things to be *named*," compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 346 *n.*]

that my answer to the farmer's objection about expense (even if I had possessed Italian enough to make it intelligible), would have been an insufficient one; and that the operation of embanking hill-sides so as to stay the rain-flow, is a work of enormous cost and difficulty.

Indeed, a work productive of good so infinite as this would be, and contending for rule over the grandest forces of nature, cannot be altogether cheap, nor altogether facile. But spend annually one-tenth of the sum you now give to build embankments against imaginary enemies, in building embankments for the help of people whom you may easily make your real friends,—and see whether your budget does not become more satisfactory, so; and, above all, learn a little hydraulics.

15. I wasted some good time, a year or two since, over a sensational novel in one of our magazines,[1] which I thought would tell me more of what the public were thinking about strikes than I could learn elsewhere. But it spent itself in dramatic effects with lucifer matches, and I learned nothing from it, and the public mislearned much. It ended (no, I believe it didn't end,—but I read no farther) with the bursting of a reservoir, and the floating away of a village. The hero, as far as I recollect, was in the half of a house which was just going to be washed down; and the anti-hero was opposite him, in the half of a tree which was just going to be torn up; and the heroine was floating between them down the stream, and one wasn't to know, till next month, which would catch her. But the hydraulics were the essentially bad part of the book, for the author made great play with the tremendous weight of water against his embankment;—it never having occurred to him that the gate of a Liverpool dry dock can keep out—and could just as easily for that matter keep in —the Atlantic Ocean, to the necessary depth in feet and inches; the depth giving the pressure, not the superficies.

[1] [*Put Yourself in His Place*, by Charles Reade, which appeared originally as a serial in the *Cornhill Magazine* during 1868 and 1869.]

16. Nay, you may see, not unfrequently, on Margate sands, your own six-years-old engineers of children keep out the Atlantic Ocean quite successfully, for a little while, from a favourite hole; the difficulty being not at all in keeping the Atlantic well out at the side, but from surreptitiously finding its way in at the bottom. And that is the real difficulty for old engineers; properly the only one; you must not let the Atlantic begin to run surreptitiously either in or out, else it soon becomes difficult to stop; and all reservoirs ought to be wide, not deep, when they are artificial, and should not be immediately above villages (though they might always be made perfectly safe merely by dividing them by walls, so that the contents could not run out all at once). But when reservoirs are *not* artificial, when the natural rocks, with adamantine wall, and embankment built up from the earth's centre, are ready to catch the rain for you, and render it back as pure as their own crystal,—if you will only here and there throw an iron valve across a cleft,—believe me—if you choose to have a dividend out of Heaven, and sell the Rain, you may get it a good deal more easily and at a figure or two higher per cent. than you can on diaphanous mustard.[1] There are certainly few men of my age who have watched the ways of Alpine torrents so closely as I have[2] (and you need not think my knowing something of art prevents me from understanding them, for the first good canal-engineer in Italy was Leonardo da Vinci, and more drawings of water-wheels and water-eddies exist of his, by far, than studies of hair and eyes[3]); and the one strong impression I have respecting them is their *utter docility and passiveness, if you*

[1] [See above, § 1.]

[2] [See, for instance, *Præterita*, ii. § 222 (extract from diary of 1849); *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. pp. 340, 341); *Unto this Last*, § 72 *n.*; *Munera Pulveris*, § 147 (Vol. XVII. pp. 97, 270); and the Letters on Inundations, Vol. XVII. pp. 547–552.]

[3] [For Leonardo as engineer, compare Vol. XIX. pp. 129–130. It may be mentioned that in the *Codex Atlanticus*, giving Leonardo's own list of his drawings, he includes "studies of water-wheels." For an account of his work in connexion with canals, etc., see vol. ii. pp. 98 *seq.* of the English translation of Eugène Müntz's *Leonardo da Vinci*, 1898.]

*will educate them young.* But our wise engineers invariably try to manage faggots instead of sticks; and, leaving the rivulets of the Viso without training, debate what bridle is to be put in the mouth of the Po![1] Which, by the way, is a *running* reservoir, considerably above the level of the plain of Lombardy; and if the bank of *that* one should break, any summer's day, there will be news of it, and more cities than Venice with water in their streets!

*June 24th.*

17. You must be content with a short letter (I wish I could flatter myself you would like a longer one) this month; but you will probably see some news of the weather here, yesterday afternoon,[2] which will give some emphasis to what I have been saying, not for the first time by any means; and so I leave you to think of it, and remain

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[1] [Compare *Deucalion*, ii. ch. ii. § 16 (Vol. XXVI. p. 340), where Ruskin refers to this letter.]

[2] [The matter was not noticed in the *Times*. A description of a typical flood on the Venetian mainland may be read in H. F. Brown's *Life on the Lagoons*, 1884, pp. 60 *seq.*]

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

18. I HAVE received from Wells, in Somersetshire, thirty pounds for the St. George's Fund, the first money sent me by a stranger.[1] For what has been given me by my personal friends I will account to them privately; and, henceforward, will accept no more given in their courteous prejudice, lest other friends, who do not believe in my crotchets, should be made uncomfortable. I am not quite sure if the sender of this money from Somersetshire would like his name to appear in so wide solitude; and therefore content myself with thus thanking him, and formally opening my accounts.

[1] [For the name of the donor (Mr. Charles W. Smith), see "Financial History of St. George's Guild," § 10 (Vol. XXX.).]

## LETTER 20

### BENEDICTION[1]

VENICE, *3rd July*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—You probably thought I had lost my temper, and written inconsiderately, when I called the whistling of the Lido steamer "accursed."[2]

I never wrote more considerately; using the longer and weaker word "accursed" instead of the simple and proper one, "cursed," to take away, as far as I could, the appearance of unseemly haste; and using the expression itself on set purpose, not merely as the fittest for the occasion, but because I have more to tell you respecting the general benediction engraved on the bell of Lucca,[3] and the particular benediction bestowed on the Marquis of B.;[4] several things more, indeed, of importance for you to know, about blessing and cursing.[5]

2. Some of you may perhaps remember the saying of St. James about the tongue: "Therewith bless we God, and therewith curse we men; out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."[6]

It is not clear whether St. James means that there should be no cursing at all (which I suppose he does), or merely that the blessing and cursing should not be uttered by the same lips. But his meaning, whatever it was, did

[1] ["On your Eyes be It" was a rejected title for this letter.]
[2] [See Letter 19, § 11 (p. 328).]
[3] [See Letter 18, § 4 (p. 307).]
[4] [See Letter 18, § 1 (p. 304).]
[5] [Blessing, compare Letter 18, § 9; and Cursing, *ibid.*, § 5; pp. 311, 309.]
[6] [James iii. 9, 10.]

not, in the issue, matter; for the Church of Christendom has always ignored this text altogether, and appointed the same persons in authority to deliver, on all needful occasions, benediction or malediction, as either might appear to them due; while our own most learned sect, wielding State power, has not only appointed a formal service of malediction in Lent, but commanded the Psalms of David, in which the blessing and cursing are inlaid as closely as the black and white in a mosaic floor, to be solemnly sung through once a month.[1]

8. I do not wish, however, to-day to speak to you of the practice of the churches; but of your own, which, observe, is in one respect singularly different. All the churches, of late years, paying less and less attention to the discipline of their people, have felt an increasing compunction in cursing them when they did wrong; while also, the wrong doing, through such neglect of discipline, becoming every day more complex, ecclesiastical authorities perceived that, if delivered with impartiality, the cursing must be so general, and the blessing so defined, as to give their services an entirely unpopular character.

4. Now, there is a little screw steamer just passing, with no deck, an omnibus cabin, a flag at both ends, and a single passenger; she is not twelve yards long, yet the beating of her screw has been so loud across the lagoon for the last five minutes, that I thought it must be a large new steamer coming in from the sea, and left my work to go and look.

Before I had finished writing that last sentence, the cry of a boy selling something black out of a basket on the quay[2] became so sharply distinguished above the voices of the always debating gondoliers, that I must needs stop again, and go down to the quay to see what he had got

[1] [The "Commination" with its ten curses is "to be used on the first day of Lent and at other times as the ordinary shall appoint." For the daily use of the Psalms, see Vol. XXIV. p. 226.]

[2] [Ruskin was on this occasion staying at the Hotel Danieli; for he says further on that the boy was in front of the Ducal Palace.]

to sell. They were half-rotten figs, shaken down, untimely, by the midsummer storms: his cry of "Fighiaie" scarcely ceased, being delivered, as I observed, just as clearly between his legs, when he was stooping to find an eatable portion of the black mess to serve a customer with, as when he was standing up.[1] His face brought the tears into my eyes, so open, and sweet, and capable it was; and so sad. I gave him three very small halfpence, but took no figs, to his surprise: he little thought how cheap the sight of him and his basket was to me, at the money; nor what this fruit "that could not be eaten, it was so evil,"[2] sold cheap before the palace of the Dukes of Venice, meant, to any one who could read signs, either in earth, or her heaven and sea.*

5. Well, the blessing, as I said, not being now often legitimately applicable to particular people by Christian priests, they gradually fell into the habit of giving it of pure grace and courtesy to their congregations; or more especially to poor persons, instead of money, or to rich ones, in exchange for it,—or generally to any one to whom they wished to be polite: while, on the contrary, the cursing, having now become widely applicable, and even necessary, was left to be understood, but not expressed; and at last, to all practical purpose, abandoned altogether (the rather that it had become very disputable whether it ever did any one the least mischief); so that,

* "And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind."—Rev. vi. 13; compare Jerem. xxiv. 8, and Amos viii. 1 and 2.[3]

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[1] [See also Letter 74, §§ 6, 10 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 33, 37).]

[2] [See Jeremiah xxiv. 3 and 8.]

[3] ["And as the evil figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so evil; surely thus saith the Lord, So will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and them that dwell in the land of Egypt" (Jeremiah xxiv. 8).

"Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto me: and behold a basket of summer fruit. And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the Lord unto me, The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more" (Amos viii. 1, 2).]

at this time being, the Pope, in his charmingest manner, blesses the bridecake of the Marquis of B., making, as it were, an ornamental confectionery figure of himself on the top of it; but has not, in anywise, courage to curse the King of Italy, although that penniless monarch has confiscated the revenues of every time-honoured religious institution in Italy; and is about, doubtless, to commission some of the Raphaels in attendance at his court (though, I believe, grooms are more in request there[1]) to paint an opposition fresco in the Vatican, representing the Sardinian instead of the Syrian Heliodorus,[2] successfully abstracting the treasures of the temple, and triumphantly putting its angels to flight.

6. Now the curious difference between your practice, and the Church's, to which I wish to-day to direct your attention, is, that while thus the clergy, in what efforts they make to retain their influence over human minds, use cursing little, and blessing much, you working men more and more frankly every day adopt the exactly contrary practice of using benediction little, and cursing much: so that, even in the ordinary course of conversation among yourselves, you very rarely bless, audibly, so much as one of your own children; but not unfrequently damn, audibly, them, yourselves, and your friends.

I wish you to think over the meaning of this habit of yours very carefully with me. I call it a habit of *yours*, observe, only with reference to your recent adoption of it. You have learned it from your superiors; but they, partly in consequence of your too eager imitation of them, are beginning to mend their manners; and it would excite much surprise, nowadays, in any European court, to hear the reigning monarch address the heir-apparent on an occasion

[1] ["Every one has heard of King Victor's inordinate love of horses, of which he had a rare supply, and spent on them much more than he could afford. We have heard that his successor, who would not sell anything that had belonged to his father, has given some hundreds of these animals as presents to Cavalry officers" (G. S. Godkin: *Life of Victor Emmanuel II.*, 1879, vol. ii. p. 211).]

[2] [For other references to Raphael's painting of this subject in the Vatican, see Vol. XIX. p. 204 *n.*]

of state festivity, as a Venetian ambassador heard our James the First address Prince Charles,—"Devil take you, why don't you dance?"[1] But, strictly speaking, the prevalence of the habit among all classes of laymen is the point in question.

*4th July.*

7. And first, it is necessary that you should understand accurately the difference between swearing and cursing, vulgarly so often confounded. They are entirely different things: the first is invoking the witness of a Spirit to an assertion you wish to make; the second is invoking the assistance of a Spirit, in a mischief you wish to inflict. When ill-educated and ill-tempered people clamorously confuse the two invocations, they are not, in reality, either cursing or swearing; but merely vomiting empty words indecently. True swearing and cursing must always be distinct and solemn; here is an old Latin oath, for instance, which, though borrowed from a stronger Greek one, and much diluted, is still grand:—

"I take to witness the Earth, and the stars, and the sea; the two lights of heaven; the falling and rising of the year; the dark power of the gods of sorrow; the sacredness of unbending Death; and may the Father of all things hear me, who sanctifies covenants with his lightning. For I lay my hand on the altar, and by the fires thereon, and the gods to whom they burn, I swear that no future day shall break this peace for Italy, nor violate the covenant she has made."[2]

That is old swearing: but the lengthy forms of it appearing partly burdensome to the celerity, and partly superstitious to the wisdom, of modern minds, have been abridged,—in England, for the most part, into the extremely simple "By God"; in France into "Sacred name of God" (often the first word of the sentence only pronounced),

[1] [Ruskin, no doubt, was told of this remark by Rawdon Brown, but it does not occur in the Venetian State Papers, so far as they have at present (1906) been printed.]

[2] [Vow of Latinus in the *Æneid*, xii. 197–202. The natural parallel is the oath of Agamemnon in Homer, *Iliad*, xix. 257 *seq.*, though it is perhaps not stronger.]

and in Italy into "Christ" or "Bacchus"; the superiority of the former Deity being indicated by omitting the preposition before the name. The oaths are "Christ,"—never "by Christ"; and "by Bacchus,"—never "Bacchus."

8. Observe also that swearing is only by extremely ignorant persons supposed to be an infringement of the Third Commandment. It is disobedience to the teaching of Christ; but the Third Commandment has nothing to do with the matter. People do not take the name of God in vain when they swear; they use it, on the contrary, very earnestly and energetically to attest what they wish to say. But when the Monster Concert at Boston begins, on the English day, with the hymn, "The will of God be done,"[1] while the audience know perfectly well that there is not one in a thousand of them who is trying to do it, or who would have it done if he could help it, unless it was his own will too,—*that* is taking the name of God in vain, with a vengeance.[2]

9. Cursing, on the other hand, is invoking the aid of a Spirit to a harm you wish to see accomplished, but which is too great for your own immediate power: and to-day I wish to point out to you what intensity of faith in the existence and activity of a spiritual world is evinced by the curse which is characteristic of the English tongue.

For, observe, habitual as it has become, there is still so much life and sincerity in the expression, that we all feel our passion partly appeased in its use; and the more serious the occasion, the more practical and effective the cursing becomes. In Mr. Kinglake's *History of the Crimean War*, you will find the —th Regiment at Alma is stated to have been materially assisted in maintaining position quite vital

[1] [The reference is to the Musical Festival and "International Peace Jubilee" at Boston (U.S.A.) in June 1872. "After the opening, each day is to be devoted to a particular country, the musical selections being taken chiefly from that country. To-day is the English Day," etc.: see letter from America of June 18, in the *Times* of July 5, 1872.]

[2] [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 46 (Vol. XVIII. p. 427); and on blasphemy generally, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, §§ 93 *seq.*, and *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*, § 80.]

to the battle by the steady imprecation delivered at it by its colonel for half-an-hour on end.[1] No quantity of benediction would have answered the purpose; the colonel might have said, "Bless you, my children," in the tenderest tones, as often as he pleased,—yet not have helped his men to keep their ground.

10. I want you therefore, first, to consider how it happens that cursing seems at present the most effectual means for encouraging human work; and whether it may not be conceivable that the work itself is of a kind which any form of effectual blessing would hinder instead of help. Then, secondly, I want you to consider what faith in a spiritual world is involved in the terms of the curse we usually employ. It has two principal forms: one complete and unqualified, "God damn your soul," implying that the soul is there, and that we cannot be satisfied with less than its destruction; the other, qualified, and on the bodily members only, "God damn your eyes and limbs." It is this last form I wish especially to examine.

For how do you suppose that either eye, or ear, or limb, *can* be damned? What is the spiritual mischief you invoke? Not merely the blinding of the eye, nor palsy of the limb; but the condemnation or judgment of them. And remember that though you are for the most part unconscious of the spiritual meaning of what you say, the instinctive satisfaction you have in saying it is as much a real movement of the spirit within you, as the beating of your heart is a real movement of the body, though you are unconscious of that also, till you put your hand on it. Put your hand also, so to speak, upon the source of the satisfaction with which you use this curse; and ascertain the law of it.

11. Now this you may best do by considering what it is which will make the eyes and the limbs blessed. For the precise contrary of that must be their damnation.

[1] [For Colonel Lacy Yea's "thunder of imprecation and command," see Kinglake's second volume, 1863, p. 412; and for the importance of the support rendered by "the tenacity of his 7th Fusileers," *ibid.*, p. 420.]

What do you think was the meaning of that saying of Christ's, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see"?[1] For to be made evermore incapable of seeing such things, must be the condemnation of the eyes. It is not merely the capacity of seeing sunshine, which is their blessing; but of seeing certain things under the sunshine; nay, perhaps, even without sunshine, the eye itself becoming a Sun. Therefore, on the other hand, the curse upon the eyes will not be mere blindness to the daylight, but blindness to particular things under the daylight; so that, when directed towards these, the eye itself becomes as the Night.

12. Again, with regard to the limbs, or general powers of the body. Do you suppose that when it is promised that "the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing"[2]—(Steam-whistle interrupts me from the *Capo d'Istria*, which is lying in front of my window with her black nose pointed at the red nose of another steamer at the next pier. There are nine large ones at this instant,—half-past six, morning, 4th July,—lying between the Church of the Redeemer and the Canal of the Arsenal; one of them an ironclad, five smoking fiercely, and the biggest,—English and half a quarter of a mile long,—blowing steam from all manner of pipes in her sides, and with such a roar through her funnel—whistle number two from *Capo d'Istria*—that I could not make any one hear me speak in this room without an effort),—do you suppose, I say, that such a form of benediction is just the same as saying that the lame man shall leap as a lion, and the tongue of the dumb mourn? Not so, but a special manner of action of the members is meant in both cases: (whistle number three from *Capo d'Istria;* I am writing on, steadily, so that you will be able to form an accurate idea, from this page, of the intervals of time in modern music. The roaring from the English boat goes on all the while, for bass to the *Capo d'Istria's* treble, and a

[1] [Luke x. 23.]
[2] [Isaiah xxxv. 6.]

tenth steamer comes in sight round the Armenian Monastery)—a particular kind of activity is meant, I repeat, in both cases. The lame man is to leap, (whistle fourth from *Capo d'Istria*, this time at high pressure, going through my head like a knife) as an innocent and joyful creature leaps, and the lips of the dumb to move melodiously: they are to be blest, so; may not be unblest even in silence; but are the absolute contrary of blest, in evil utterance. (Fifth whistle, a double one, from *Capo d'Istria*, and it is seven o'clock, nearly; and here's my coffee, and I must stop writing. Sixth whistle—the *Capo d'Istria* is off, with her crew of morning bathers. Seventh,—from I don't know which of the boats outside—and I count no more.[1])

*5th July.*

18. Yesterday, in these broken sentences, I tried to make you understand that for all human creatures there are necessarily three separate states: life positive, under blessing,—life negative, under curse,—and death, neutral between these; and, henceforward, take due note of the quite true assumption you make in your ordinary malediction, that the state of condemnation may begin in this world, and separately affect every living member of the body.

You assume the fact of these two opposite states, then; but you have no idea whatever of the meaning of your words, nor of the nature of the blessedness or condemnation you admit. I will try to make your conception clearer.

14. In the year 1869, just before leaving Venice,[2] I had been carefully looking at a picture by Victor Carpaccio, representing the dream of a young princess. Carpaccio has taken much pains to explain to us, as far as he can, the

[1] [For another reference to "the steam music" in modern Venice, see Letter 42, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 93).]

[2] [See Vol. IV. p. 356, and Vol. XIX. p. xlvii. The reproduction of the picture here given (Plate VIII.) is made from one of the coloured photographs of Ruskin's copy, referred to in Vol. XIII. pp. 525–526. For details added to this general description of the picture, see Letters 71, 72 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 744, 760) and 91, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 441); for the Legend of St. Ursula, Letter 71, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 740); and for other references to it, see Vol. XXIV. p. li.]

kind of life she leads, by completely painting her little bedroom in the light of dawn, so that you can see everything in it. It is lighted by two doubly-arched windows, the arches being painted crimson round their edges, and the capitals of the shafts that bear them, gilded. They are filled at the top with small round panes of glass; but beneath, are open to the blue morning sky, with a low lattice across them: and in the one at the back of the room are set two beautiful white Greek vases with a plant in each; one having rich dark and pointed green leaves, the other crimson flowers, but not of any species known to me, each at the end of a branch like a spray of heath.[1]

These flower-pots stand on a shelf which runs all round the room, and beneath the window, at about the height of the elbow, and serves to put things on anywhere: beneath it, down to the floor, the walls are covered with green cloth; but above, are bare and white. The second window is nearly opposite the bed, and in front of it is the princess's reading-table, some two feet and a half square, covered by a red cloth with a white border and dainty fringe; and beside it her seat, not at all like a reading-chair in Oxford, but a very small three-legged stool like a music-stool, covered with crimson cloth. On the table are a book set up at a slope fittest for reading, and an hour-glass. Under the shelf, near the table, so as to be easily reached by the outstretched arm, is a press full of books. The door of this has been left open, and the books, I am grieved to say, are rather in disorder, having been pulled about before the princess went to bed, and one left standing on its side.

Opposite this window, on the white wall, is a small shrine or picture (I can't see which, for it is in sharp retiring perspective) with a lamp before it, and a silver vessel hung from the lamp, looking like one for holding incense.

15. The bed is a broad four-poster, the posts being beautifully wrought golden or gilded rods, variously wreathed

[1] [Identified in Letter 71 as olive and dianthus (Vol. XXVIII. p. 745); olive being corrected to vervain in Letter 74 (Vol. XXIX. p. 31).]

and branched, carrying a canopy of warm red. The princess's shield is at the head of it,[1] and the feet are raised entirely above the floor of the room, on a dais which projects at the lower end so as to form a seat, on which the child has laid her crown. Her little blue slippers lie at the side of the bed,—her white dog beside them. The coverlid is scarlet, the white sheet folded half-way back over it; the young girl lies straight, bending neither at waist nor knee, the sheet rising and falling over her in a narrow unbroken wave, like the shape of the coverlid of the last sleep, when the turf scarcely rises. She is some seventeen or eighteen years old, her head is turned towards us on the pillow, the cheek resting on her hand, as if she were thinking, yet utterly calm in sleep, and almost colourless. Her hair is tied with a narrow riband, and divided into two wreaths, which encircle her head like a double crown. The white nightgown hides the arm raised on the pillow, down to the wrist.

16. At the door of the room an angel enters (the little dog, though lying awake, vigilant, takes no notice). He is a very small angel, his head just rises a little above the shelf round the room, and would only reach as high as the princess's chin, if she were standing up. He has soft grey wings, lustreless; and his dress, of subdued blue, has violet sleeves, open above the elbow, and showing white sleeves below. He comes in without haste, his body, like a mortal one, casting shadow from the light through the door behind, his face perfectly quiet; a palm-branch in his right hand—a scroll in his left.

So dreams the princess, with blessed eyes, that need no earthly dawn. It is very pretty of Carpaccio to make her dream out the angel's dress so particularly, and notice the slashed sleeves; and to dream so little an angel—very nearly a doll angel,—bringing her the branch of palm, and message. But the lovely characteristic of all is the evident delight of her continual life. Royal power over herself,

[1] [See Letter 72, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 760).]

VI.

J. Ruskin. Allen & Co. Sc.

Part of the Chapel of St Mary of the Thorn,
Pisa
as it was in 1845.

(ultramarine), and its name was changed to "St. Mary's of the Thorn."[1]

In the year 1840 I first drew it, then as perfect as when it was built. Six hundred and ten years had only given the marble of it a tempered glow, or touched its sculpture here and there with softer shade. I daguerreotyped the eastern end of it some years later (photography being then unknown), and copied the daguerreotype, that people might not be plagued in looking, by the lustre. The frontispiece[2] to this letter is engraved from the drawing,[3] and will show you what the building was like.

21. But the last quarter of a century has brought changes, and made the Italians wiser. British Protestant missionaries explained to them that they had only got a piece of blackberry stem in their ultramarine box. German philosophical missionaries explained to them that the Crown of Thorns itself was only a graceful metaphor. French republican missionaries explained to them that chapels were inconsistent with liberty on the quay; and their own Engineering missionaries of civilization explained to them that steam-power was independent of the Madonna. And now in 1872, rowing by steam, digging by steam, driving by steam, here, behold, are a troublesome pair of human arms out of employ. So the Engineering missionaries fit them with hammer and chisel, and set them to break up the Spina Chapel.

A costly kind of stone-breaking, this, for Italian parishes to set paupers on! Are there not rocks enough of Apennine, think you, they could break down instead? For truly, the God of their Fathers, and of their land, would rather see them mar His own work, than His children's.

Believe me, faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] [See vol. iii. pp. 310–315 of *Pisa Illustrata nelle Arti del Disegno*, da Alessandro da Morrona (1812).]

[2] [Plate VII., now transferred to the present place.]

[3] [That is, from the drawing made from the daguerreotype; for another reference to it, see Letter 57, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 408). The drawing of 1840 is given in Vol. IV. (p. 136).]

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

NORWOOD, S.E., *June 5th.*

22. DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—Will you allow me to inform you that the utterance which you attribute to *me*, on the 12th page of this month's *Fors Clavigera*,[1] is quite wrongly assigned?

It is impossible that you should at any time have heard me say from my pulpit what you ascribe to me. Simply because I never said it, and *could* not—not at all believing it.

I can only account for your misrepresentation by supposing that during my absence from home, from February until the end of June, in the year 1870, or again in July and August of last year, you may have mistaken for me—some other person—doing duty in my stead.

Of course it is of no consequence to the readers of *Fors Clavigera* what "the Rev. Mr. Tipple" says or does not say; but you will understand that to "the Rev. Mr. Tipple" *himself*, it is of consequence—to be exhibited in its pages—with words on his lips which are wholly at variance with what he believes, and is engaged in trying to teach.

Will you be kind enough, therefore, to correct the error into which you have fallen in your next number?

I am, yours truly,
S. A. TIPPLE.

23. If Mr. Tipple had been as unselfish as he is modest, and had considered in anywise what *was* of consequence to the readers of *Fors Clavigera*, as well as of consequence to himself, he would not have left them without some explanation of his eagerness to disclaim the doctrine attributed to him, however erroneously, in the passage he refers to. No words, I beg him to observe, *are* attributed to him. In quoting actual expression I always use inverted commas. The passage in question is the best abstract I could write of a piece of sermon which occupied some five minutes in delivery, and which I myself heard delivered in Mr. Tipple's chapel, and not, certainly, by Mr. Tipple's substitute in 1870, for my father and I had a long talk over the passage when we came out; and my father died in 1864. But I have ever since kept note of this, now so hastily abjured, utterance, as the most perfect and clear statement of the great Evangelical doctrine of salvation by faith only which I ever heard from any English divine. My abstract of it is more logical than eloquent, but I answer absolutely for its accuracy, and for the specification of "thieves" and "devourers of widows' houses" by the preacher: and I am sure that some

[1] [Letter 18, § 9 (p. 311).]

at least of the readers of *Fors Clavigera* will think it of consequence to know how Mr. Tipple, disclaiming the statement even in this undecorated form, can reconcile it with his conscience to remain the instructor of a Protestant congregation.

For my own part, I can only say that I publish his letter with extreme pleasure; and, recommending him, for the future, to examine more accurately into the tenets of his substitutes, congratulate him on his vigorous repudiation of a doctrine which the Church of England most wisely describes as being "very full of comfort,"[1] but which, she ought farther to have observed, is much more comfortable to rogues than to honest people.

[1] [See Article XI.: "Of the Justification of Men."]

# LETTER 21

## DIVIDEND[1]

DULWICH, 10*th August*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—I have not yet fully treated the subject of my last letter, for I must show you how things, as well as people, may be blessed, or cursed; and to show you that, I must explain to you the story of Achan the son of Carmi,[2] which, too probably, you don't feel at present any special interest in; as well as several matters more about steam-engines and steam-whistling: but, in the meantime, here is my lost bit of letter from Florence, written in continuation of the June number;[3] and it is well that it should be put into place at once (I see that it notices, incidentally, some of the noises in Florence, which might with advantage cease), since it answers the complaints of two aggrieved readers.

FLORENCE, 10*th June*, 1872.

2. In the page for correspondence you will find a letter from a workman,[4] interesting in many respects; and besides, sufficiently representing the kind of expostulation now constantly made with me, on my not advertising either these letters, or any other of my writings. These remonstrances, founded as they always are, very politely, on the assumption that every one who reads my books derives extraordinary benefit from them, require from me,

[1] [For the title, see §§ 9, 10.]
[2] [See Joshua vii. 1. Ruskin does not return to the story.]
[3] [See Letter 19, § 5 (p. 323).]
[4] [See below, § 23, this correspondence also having been intended for the June number.]

at least, the courtesy of more definite answer than I have hitherto found time to give.

In the first place, my correspondents write under the conviction,—a very natural one,—that no individual practice can have the smallest power to change or check the vast system of modern commerce, or the methods of its transaction.

I, on the contrary, am convinced that it is by his personal conduct that any man of ordinary power will do the greatest amount of good that is in him to do; and when I consider the quantity of wise talking which has passed in at one long ear of the world, and out at the other, without making the smallest impression upon its mind, I am sometimes tempted for the rest of my life to try and do what seems to me rational, silently; and to speak no more.

But were it only for the exciting of earnest talk, action is highly desirable, and is, in itself, advertisement of the best. If, for instance, I had only written in these letters that I disapproved of advertisements, and had gone on advertising the letters themselves, you would have passed by my statement contemptuously, as one in which I did not believe myself. But now, most of my readers are interested in the opinion, dispute it eagerly, and are ready to hear patiently what I can say in its defence.

8. For main defence of it, I reply (now definitely to my correspondent of the Black Country):—You ought to read books, as you take medicine, by advice, and not advertisement. Perhaps, however, you *do* take medicine by advertisement, but you will not, I suppose, venture to call that a wise proceeding? Every good physician, at all events, knows it to be an unwise one, and will by no means consent to proclaim even his favourite pills by the town-crier. But perhaps you have no literary physician,—no friend to whom you can go and say, "I want to learn what is true on such a subject—what book must I read?" You prefer exercising your independent judgment, and you

expect me to appeal to it, by paying for the insertion in all the penny papers of a paragraph that may win your confidence. As, for instance, "Just published, the —th number of *Fors Clavigera*, containing the most important information on the existing state of trade in Europe; and on all subjects interesting to the British Operative. Thousandth thousand. Price 7d. 7 for 3s. 6d. Proportional abatement on large orders. No intelligent workman should pass a day without acquainting himself with the entirely original views contained in these pages."

You don't want to be advised in that manner, do you say? but only to know that such a book exists. What good would its existence do you, if you did not know whether it was worth reading? Were you as rich as Crœsus, you have no business to spend such a sum as 7d. unless you are sure of your money's worth. Ask some one who knows good books from bad ones to tell you what to buy, and be content. You will hear of *Fors*, so, in time;—if it be worth hearing of.

4. But you have no acquaintance, you say, among people who know good books from bad ones? Possibly not; and yet, half the poor gentlemen of England are fain nowadays to live by selling their opinions on this subject. It is a bad trade, let me tell them. Whatever judgment they have, likely to be useful to the human beings about them, may be expressed in few words; and those words of sacred advice ought not to be articles of commerce. Least of all ought they to be so ingeniously concocted that idle readers may remain content with reading their eloquent account of a book, instead of the book itself. It is an evil trade, and in our company of Mont Rose,[1] we will have no reviewers; we will have, once for all, our book Gazette, issued every 1st of January, naming, under alphabetical list of authors and of titles, whatever serviceable or worthy writings have been published during

[1] [See Letter 17, § 6 (p. 296).]

the past year;[1] and if, in the space of the year following, we have become acquainted with the same thoroughly, our time will not have been ill-spent, though we hear of no new book for twelve months. And the choice of the books to be named, as well as the brief accounts of them given in our Gazette, will be by persons not paid for their opinions, and who will not, therefore, express themselves voluminously.

Meantime, your newspapers being your present advisers, I beg you to observe that a number of *Fors* is duly sent to all the principal ones, whose editors may notice it if they choose; but I will not pay for their notice, nor for any man's.

5. These, then, are my immediate reasons for not advertising. Indirect ones, I have, which weigh with me no less. I write this morning, wearily, and without spirit, being nearly deaf with the bell-ringing and bawling which goes on here, at Florence, ceaselessly, in advertisement of prayers, and wares; as if people could not wait on God for what they wanted, but God had to ring for them, like waiters, for what *He* wanted: and as if they could think of nothing they were in need of till the need was suggested to them by bellowing at their doors, or bill-posting on their house-corners. Indeed, the fresco-painting of the bill-sticker is likely, so far as I see, to become the principal fine art of modern Europe:[2] here, at all events, it is now the principal source of street effect. Giotto's time is past, like Oderigi's;[3] but the bill-poster succeeds: and the Ponte Vecchio, the principal thoroughfare across the Arno, is on one side plastered over with bills in the exact centre, while the other side, for various reasons not to be specified, is little available to passengers.

The bills on the bridge are theatrical, announcing cheap operas; but religious bills, inviting to ecclesiastical festivities,

[1] [Compare Letter 57, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 407).]
[2] [Compare *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, Vol. VIII. p. 194 *n*.]
[3] [The illuminator: see Vol. XII. p. 477; and, for another reference to him, Letter 86, § 10 (Vol. XXIX. p. 346).]

are similarly plastered over the front of the church once called "the Bride" for its beauty;[1] and the pious bill-stickers paste them ingeniously in and out upon the sculptured bearings of the shields of the old Florentine knights. Political bills, in various stages of decomposition, decorate the street corners and sheds of the markets; and among the last year's rags of these one may still read here and there the heroic apostrophe, "Rome! or Death."[2]

6. It never was clear to me, until now, what the desperately-minded persons who found themselves in that dilemma, wanted with Rome; and now it is quite clear to me that they never *did* want it,—but only the ground it was once built on, for finance offices and railroad stations:[3] or, it may be, for new graves, when Death, to young Italy, as to old, comes *without* alternative. For, indeed, young Italy has just chosen the most precious piece of ground above Florence, and a twelfth-century church in the midst of it, to bury itself in, at its leisure; and make the summer air loathsome and pestiferous, from San Miniato to Arcetri.[4]

No Rome, I repeat, did young Italy want; but only the site of Rome. Three days before I left it, I went to see a piece not merely of the rampart, but of the actual wall, of Tullius, which zealous Mr. Parker with fortunate excavation has just laid open on the Aventine.[5] Fifty feet

[1] [The Church of S. Maria Novella, called by Michael Angelo "La Sposa," the Bride. For another reference to the shields on the Ponte Vecchio, see *Mornings in Florence*, § 78 (Vol. XXIII. p. 371).]

[2] [After the first defeats of the French armies in 1870, the French army of occupation was recalled from Rome. On September 11 the Italian armies crossed the Papal frontier, and on the 20th they arrived under the walls of Rome. On October 2 a plébiscite was taken, and the annexation of Rome to the kingdom of Italy was voted.]

[3] [See Letter 18, § 14 (p. 315).]

[4] [Murray's *Handbook for Central Italy*, 1864 edition (by Palgrave), has the following remarks which explain this passage: "The Church of St. Miniato, which had remained closed for several years, has been converted into a receptacle for the dead, and is destined to form the centre of a large suburban cemetery. Already it has been more than half filled with corpses—graves, in close juxtaposition and above each other, being dug in the floor; the consequence of which is, as leaden coffins are not used, that a visit to this elegant basilica during the hot months is far from agreeable." The grounds of the convent are now laid out as a cemetery.]

[5] [For references to J. H. Parker and his *Archæology of Rome*, see Vol. XXIII. p. 99 and *n*. Parker was in Rome pursuing his excavations at this time, and

of blocks of massy stone, duly laid; not one shifted; a wall which was just eighteen hundred years old when Westminster Abbey was begun building. I went to see it mainly for your sakes, for after I have got past Theseus and his vegetable soup,[1] I shall have to tell you something of the constitutions of Servius Tullius;[2] and besides, from the sweet slope of vineyard beneath this king's wall, one looks across the fields where Cincinnatus was found ploughing, according to Livy;[3] though, you will find, in Smith's Dictionary, that Mr. Niebuhr "has pointed out all the inconsistencies and impossibilities in this legend;" and that he is "inclined to regard it as altogether fabulous."[4]

7. Very possibly it may be so (not that, for my own poor part, I attach much importance to Niebuhr's "inclinations"), but it is fatally certain that whenever you begin to seek the real authority for legends, you will generally find that the ugly ones have good foundation, and the beautiful ones none. Be prepared for this; and remember that a lovely legend is all the more precious when it *has* no foundation. Cincinnatus might actually have been found ploughing beside the Tiber fifty times over; and it might have signified little to any one;—least of all to you or me. But if Cincinnatus never was so found, nor ever existed at all in flesh and blood; but the great Roman nation, in its strength of conviction that manual labour in tilling the ground was good and honourable, invented a quite bodiless Cincinnatus; and set him, according to its fancy, in furrows of the field, and put its own words into his month, and gave the honour of its ancient deeds into his ghostly

Ruskin in his diary notes on "19th May. At Coliseum all morning. Then Aventine with Mr. Parker." For a note on these excavations, and on the course of the Agger of Servius Tullius generally, see p. 46 of the Introduction to Murray's *Handbook for Rome* (1894 edition).]

[1] [A subject promised in Letters 2 and 6 (pp. 29, 102), and ultimately discussed in Letter 24, pp. 429, 431.]

[2] [This, however, was not done.]

[3] [Livy, book iii. chaps. xxvi.–xxix.]

[4] [See Dr. W. Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, 1850, vol. i. p. 752, and Niebuhr, vol. ii. pp. 266–269. For another reference to Niebuhr, see Vol. XXII. p. 500.]

12. Of such architecture the anonymous society will produce the most it can; and lease it at the highest rents it can; and advertise and extend itself, so as, if possible, at last to rebuild, after its manner, all the great cities of Italy. Now the real moving powers at the bottom of all this are essentially the vanity and lust of the middle classes, all of them seeking to live, if it may be, in a cheap palace, with as much cheap pleasure as they can have in it, and the airs of great people. By "cheap" pleasure, I mean, as I will show you[1] in explaining the nature of cursed things, pleasure which has not been won by attention, or deserved by toil, but is snatched or forced by wanton passion. But the mechanical power which gives effect to this vanity and lust, is the instinct of the anonymous society, and of other such, to get a dividend by catering for them.

13. It has chanced, by help of the Third Fors (as again and again in the course of these letters[2] the thing to my purpose has been brought before me just when I needed it), that having to speak of interest of money, and first of the important part of it consisting in rents, I should be able to lay my finger on the point of land in all Europe where the principle of it is, at this moment, doing the most mischief. But, of course, all our great building work is now carried on in the same way; nor will any architecture, properly so called, be now possible for many years in Europe. For true architecture is a thing which puts its builders to cost—not which pays them dividends. If a society chose to organize itself to build the most beautiful houses, and the strongest that it could, either for art's sake, or love's—either palaces for itself, or houses for the poor,—such a society would build something worth looking at, but not get dividends. True architecture is built by the man who wants a house for himself, and builds it to his own liking, at his own cost; not for his own gain, to the liking of other people.

[1] [See Letters 61, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 502) and 89, § 13 (Vol. XXIX. p. 412).]
[2] [See, for instance, above, pp. 42, 81, 82, 315, 323, 328.]

14. All orders of houses may be beautiful when they are thus built by their master to his own liking. Three streets from me, at this moment, is one of the sixteenth century. The corner stones of it are ten feet long by three broad, and two thick—fifty courses of such, and the cornice; flawless stones, laid as level as a sea-horizon, so that the walls become one solid mass of unalterable rock,—four grey cliffs set square in mid-Florence, some hundred and twenty feet from cornice to ground.[1] The man who meant to live in it built it so; and Titian painted his little grand-daughter for him. He got no dividend by his building—no profit on his picture. House and picture, absolutely untouched by time, remain to this day.

15. On the hills about me at Coniston there are also houses built by their owners, according to their means, and pleasure. A few loose stones gathered out of the fields, set one above another to a man's height from the ground; a branch or two of larch, set gable-wise across them,—on these some turf, cut from the next peat moss. It is enough: the owner gets no dividend on his building; but he has covert from wind and rain, and is honourable among the sons of Earth. He has built as best he could, to his own mind.[2]

16. You think that there ought to be no such differences in habitation: that nobody should live in a palace, and nobody under a heap of turf? But if ever you become educated enough to know something about the arts, you will like to see a palace built in noble manner; and if ever you become educated enough to know something about men, you will love some of them so well as to desire that at least they should live in palaces, though you cannot. But it will be long now before you can know much, either about arts or men. The one point you may be assured of

[1] [The Strozzi Palace. For the picture (now at Berlin), see Plate XIX. in Vol. XXII. (p. 223).]

[2] [Compare the chapter on "The Mountain Cottage—Westmoreland" in *The Poetry of Architecture* (Vol. I. pp. 42 *seq.*).]

is that your happiness does not at all depend on the size of your house—(or, if it does, rather on its smallness than largeness[1]); but depends entirely on your having peaceful and safe possession of it—on your habits of keeping it clean and in order—on the materials of it being trustworthy, if they are no more than stone and turf—and on your contentment with it, so that gradually you may mend it to your mind, day by day, and leave it to your children a better house than it was.

To your children, and to theirs, desiring for them that they may live as you have lived; and not strive to forget you, and stammer when any one asks who you were, because, forsooth, they have become fine folks by your help.

Euston Hotel, *18th August.*

17. Thus far I had written at Florence. To-day[2] I received a severe lesson from a friend whose teaching is always serviceable to me, of which the main effect was to show me that I had been wrong in allowing myself so far in the habit of jesting, either in these letters, or in any other of my books, on grave subjects; and that although what little play I had permitted, rose, as I told you before,[3] out of the nature of the things spoken of, it prevented many readers from understanding me rightly, and was an offence to others. The second effect of the lesson was to show me how vain it was, in the present state of English literature and mind, to expect anybody to attend to the real force of the words I wrote; and that it would be better to spare myself much of the trouble I took in choosing them, and try to get things explained by reiteration instead of precision, or, if I was too proud to do that,

[1] [Compare Letter 63, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 548); and see what Ruskin says of the conclusions which he drew in his youth from seeing the castles of England (*Præterita*, i. §§ 6, 35; ii. § 22).]

[2] [The diary shows that on this day Ruskin had come up from Toft, where he had been staying with his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Leycester, and where Miss Rose La Touche had been one of the guests.]

[3] [See above, p. 293 (§ 3); and compare, below, p. 544 *n.*]

to write less myself, and only urge your attention, or aid it, to other people's happier sayings. Which indeed I meant to do, as *Fors* went on; for I have always thought that more true force of persuasion might be obtained by rightly choosing and arranging what others have said, than by painfully saying it again in one's own way. And since as to the matter which I have to teach you, all the great writers and thinkers of the world are agreed,[1] without any exception whatsoever, it is certain I can teach you better in other men's words than my own, if I can lay my hand at once on what I want of them. And the upshot of the lesson, and of my meditation upon it, is, that henceforward to the end of the year I will try very seriously to explain, as I promised, step by step, the things put questionably in last year's letters. We will conclude therefore first, and as fast as we can, the debate respecting interest of money which was opened in my letter of January, 1871.[2]

18. An impatient correspondent of mine, Mr. W. C. Sillar,[3] who has long been hotly engaged in testifying publicly against the wickedness of taking interest, writes to me that all I say is mysterious, that I am bound to speak plainly, and, above everything, if I think taking interest sinful, not to hold bank stock.

Once for all, then, Mr. Sillar is wholly right as to the abstract fact that lending for gain is sinful; and he has, in various pamphlets, shown unanswerably that whatever is said either in the Bible, or in any other good and ancient book, respecting usury, is intended by the writers to apply to the receiving of interest, be it ever so little. But Mr. Sillar has allowed this idea to take possession of him, body and soul;[4] and is just as fondly enthusiastic about abolition of usury as some other people are about the liquor laws. Now of course drunkenness is mischievous, and usury is mischievous, and whoredom is mischievous, and idleness is

[1] [Compare Letter 76, § 16 (Vol. XXIX. p. 98); and Vol. XXII. p. 505.]
[2] [Letter 1, §§ 12–14 (pp. 23–26).]
[3] [See Vol. XVII. p. 220 *n.*, where Mr. Sillar's pamphlets are enumerated.]
[4] [For Mr. Sillar's reply to these remarks, see Letter 22, § 26 (p. 393).]

mischievous. But we cannot reform the world by preaching temperance only, nor refusal of interest only, nor chastity only, nor industry only. I am myself more set on teaching healthful industry than anything else, as the beginning of all redemption; then, purity of heart and body; if I can get these taught, I know that nobody so taught will either get drunk, or, in any unjust manner, "either a borrower or a lender be."[1] But I expect also far higher results than either of these, on which, being utterly bent, I am very careless about such minor matters as the present conditions either of English brewing or banking. I hold bank stock simply because I suppose it to be safer than any other stock, and I take the interest of it, because though taking interest is, in the abstract, as wrong as war, the entire fabric of society is at present so connected with both usury and war, that it is not possible violently to withdraw, nor wisely to set example of withdrawing, from either evil.[2] I entirely, in the abstract, disapprove of war; yet have the profoundest sympathy with Colonel Yea and his fusiliers at Alma, and only wish I had been there with them.[3] I have by no means equal sympathy either with bankers or landlords; but am certain that for the present it is better that I receive my dividends as usual, and that Miss Hill should continue to collect my rents in Marylebone.[4]

19. "Ananias over again, or worse," Mr. Sillar will probably exclaim, when he reads this, and invoke lightning against me. I will abide the issue of his invocation, and only beg him to observe respecting either ancient or modern denunciations of interest, that they are much beside the mark unless they are accompanied with some explanation of the manner in which borrowing and lending, when necessary, can be carried on without it. Neither *are* often necessary in healthy states of society; but they always must remain so to some extent; and the name "Mount

[1] [*Hamlet*, Act i. sc. 3.]
[2] [Compare Letter 44, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 139).]
[3] [Compare Letter 20, § 9 (p. 339).]
[4] [See Letter 10, § 15 (p. 175).]

of Pity,"* given still in French and Italian to the pawnbroker's shop, descends from a time when lending to the poor was as much a work of mercy as giving to them. And both lending and borrowing are virtues, when the borrowing is prudent, and the lending kind; how much otherwise than kind lending at interest usually is, you, I suppose, do not need to be told; but how much otherwise than prudent nearly all borrowing is, and above everything, trade on a large scale on borrowed capital, it is very necessary for us all to be told. And for a beginning of other people's words, here are some quoted by Mr. Sillar from a work on the Labour question recently published in Canada, which, though commonplace, and evidently the expressions of a person imperfectly educated, are true, earnest, and worth your reading:—

"These Scripture usury laws, then, are for no particular race and for no particular time. They lie at the very foundations of national progress and wealth. They form the only great safeguards of labour, and are the security of civil society, and the strength and protection of commerce itself. Let us beware, for our own sakes, how we lay our hand upon the barriers which God has reared around the humble dwelling of the labouring man. . . .

"Business itself is a pleasure, but it is the anxieties and burdens of business arising all out of this debt system, which have caused so many aching pillows and so many broken hearts. What countless multitudes, during the last three hundred years, have gone down to bankruptcy and

* The "Mount" is the heap of money in store for lending without interest. You shall have a picture of it in next number, as drawn by a brave landscape painter four hundred years ago; and it will ultimately be one of the crags of our own Mont Rose;[1] and well should be, for it was first raised among the rocks of Italy by a Franciscan monk, for refuge to the poor against the usury of the Lombard merchants who gave name to our Lombard Street, and perished by their usury, as their successors are like enough to do also. But the story goes back to Friedrich II. of Germany again, and is too long for this letter.[2]

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[1] [See Letter 17, § 6, p. 296; and in this letter, p. 354.]

[2] [Ruskin seems here to refer, first, to the war of the Lombard League against Frederick II.—"the contest of the craftsman with the pillaging soldier," *Val d'Arno*, § 91 (Vol. XXIII. p. 55); then, to the fall of the free cities under the "usurer's fang," *ibid.*, pp. 161, 162; and to the establishment of the "Mount of Pity" by Brother Marco, of San Gallo: see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 203 (Vol. XXII. p. 439).]

shame—what fair prospects have been for ever blighted—what happy homes desolated—what peace destroyed—what ruin and destruction have ever marched hand in hand with this system of debt, paper, and usury! Verily its sins have reached unto heaven and its iniquities are very great.

"What shall the end of these things be? God only knoweth. I fear the system is beyond a cure. All the great interests of humanity are overborne by it, and nothing can flourish as it ought till it is taken out of the way. It contains within itself, as we have at times witnessed, most potent elements of destruction which in one hour may bring all its riches to nought."

20. Here, lastly for this month, is another piece of Marmontel for you, describing an ideal landlord's mode of "investing" his money; losing, as it appears, half his income annually by such investment, yet by no means with "aching pillows" or broken hearts for the result. (By the way, for a lesson in writing, observe that I know the Canada author to be imperfectly educated merely by one such phrase as "aching pillow"—for pillows don't ache—and again, by his thinking it religious and impressive to say "knoweth" instead of "knows.") But listen to Marmontel:[1]—

"In the neighbourhood of this country-house lived a kind of Philosopher, not an old one, but in the prime of life, who, after having enjoyed everything that he could during six months of the year in town, was in the habit of coming to enjoy six months of his own company in a voluptuous solitude. He presently came to call upon Elise. 'You have the reputation of a wise man, sir,' she said—'tell me, what is your plan of life?' 'My plan, madame? I have never had any,' answered the count. 'I do everything that amuses me. I seek everything that I like, and I avoid with care everything that annoys or displeases me.' 'Do you live alone, or do you see people?' asked Elise. 'I see sometimes our clergyman, whom I lecture on morals. I chat with labourers, who are better informed than all our savants. I give balls to little village girls, the prettiest in the world. I arrange little lotteries for them, of laces and ribands.' (Wrong, Mr. Philosopher: as many ribands as you please; but no lotteries.) 'What?' said Elise, with great surprise, 'do those sort of people know what love is?' 'Better than we do, madame—better than we do a hundred times; they love each other like turtle-doves—they make me wish to be married myself?' 'You will confess, however,' said Elise, 'that they love without any delicacy.' 'Nay, madame, delicacy is a refinement of art—they have only the instincts of nature; but, indeed, they have in feeling what we have only in fancy. I have tried, like another, to love,

[1] ["Le Scrupule, ou l'amour mécontent de lui-même" in *Contes Moraux*, Paris, 1765, vol. i. p. 107. The girl's name is Belisa in Marmontel.]

and to be beloved, in the town,—there, caprice and fashion arrange everything, or derange it:—here, there is true liking, and true choice. You will see in the course of the gaieties I give them, how these simple and tender hearts seek each other, without knowing what they are doing.' 'You give me,' replied Elise, 'a picture of the country I little expected; everybody says those sort of people are so much to be pitied.' 'They were so, madame, some years since; but I have found the secret of rendering their condition more happy.' 'Oh! you must tell me your secret!' interrupted Elise, with vivacity. 'I wish also to put it in practice.' 'Nothing can be easier,' replied the count,—'this is what I do: I have about two thousand a year of income; I spend five hundred in Paris, in the two visits that I make there during the year,—five hundred more in my country-house,—and I have a thousand to spare, which I spend on my exchanges.' 'And what exchanges do you make?' 'Well,' said the count, 'I have fields well cultivated, meadows well watered, orchards delicately hedged, and planted with care.' 'Well! what then?' 'Why, Lucas, Blaise, and Nicholas, my neighbours, and my good friends, have pieces of land neglected or worn out; they have no money to cultivate them. I give them a bit of mine instead acre for acre; and the same space of land which hardly fed them, enriches them in two harvests; the earth which is ungrateful under their hands, becomes fertile in mine. I choose the seed for it, the way of digging, the manure which suits it best, and as soon as it is in good state, I think of another exchange. Those are my amusements.' 'That is charming!' cried Elise; 'you know then the art of agriculture?' 'I learn a little of it, madame; every day, I oppose the theories of the savants to the experience of the peasants. I try to correct what I find wrong in the reasonings of the one, and in the practice of the other.' 'That is an amusing study; but how you ought to be adored then in these cantons! these poor labourers must regard you as their father!' 'On each side, we love each other very much, madame.'"

21. This is all very pretty, but falsely romantic, and not to be read at all with the unqualified respect due to the natural truth of the passages I before quoted to you from Marmontel.[1] He wrote this partly in the hope of beguiling foolish and selfish persons to the unheard-of amusement of doing some good to their fellow-creatures; but partly also in really erroneous sentiment, his own character having suffered much deterioration by his compliance with the manners of the Court in the period immediately preceding the French Revolution. Many of the false relations between the rich and poor, which could not but end in such catastrophe, are indicated in the above-quoted passage. There

[1] [Letters 14, §§ 8-10, and 17, § 9 (pp. 251-254, 300).]

is no recognition of duty on either side: the landlord enjoys himself benevolently, and the labourers receive his benefits in placid gratitude, without being either provoked or instructed to help themselves. Their material condition is assumed to be necessarily wretched unless continually relieved; while their household virtue and honour are represented (truly) as purer than those of their masters. The Revolution could not do away with this fatal anomaly; to this day the French peasant is a better man than his lord; and no government will be possible in France until she has learned that all authority, before it can be honoured, must be honourable.

22. But, putting the romantic method of operation aside, the question remains whether Marmontel is right in his main idea that a landlord should rather take £2000 in rents, and return £1000 in help to his tenants, than remit the £1000 of rents at once. To which I reply, that it is primarily better for the State, and ultimately for the tenant, that administrative power should be increased in the landlord's hands; but that it ought not to be by rents which he can change at his own pleasure, but by fixed duties under State law.[1] Of which, in due time;[2]—I do not say in my next letter, for that would be mere defiance of the Third Fors.

Ever faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 152 (Vol. XVII. p. 439).]
[2] [For an exposition of Ruskin's proposed practice with regard to rents, see Letter 58 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 421 *seq.*).]

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

TIPTON, *8th April*, 1872.

23. SIR,—You have written a many letters to workmen, and seem to have suffered from a many replies by clerks, manufacturers, and others, to whom your letters were not addressed; and as you have noticed some of their performances, I am encouraged to expect you will kindly read one written by a man belonging to the class that you have chosen to write to,—one who is emphatically a workman, labouring many hours daily with hands and head in the wilderness known to people living in pleasanter places as the Black Country.

This letter is not, however, sent to invite you to sympathise with me on account of the sooty residence I endure, for it is not so unpleasant a place to a man with a healthy mind, as gentlefolks with exaggerated sensibilities are apt to consider it. We do see the sky, and sometimes the green fields, and those who always live among the latter don't seem to be more refined, more elevated, or more use in the world than we are. But it is written very respectfully to remonstrate with you on account of your peculiar method of publication. You write books and letters, therefore I suppose you wish them to be read; but did it never occur to you that in order to be read, they must be made known to those whom you desire to read them? and how can that be done unless their publication is advertised? You object to do that, but do not substitute any other method—if, indeed, there is any other—of informing us of the letters and books that you have written. Booksellers do not offer your volumes, because your conditions of sale do not allow them to make a fair profit. Their customers can purchase the books as cheap as the book-dealer, and with as little trouble as an application to him would give them*—supposing they have accidentally heard of the books. Like many thousands more in this country of black faces and horny hands, I am imperfectly educated, but desirous to learn, and able, without much self-denial or any inconvenience, to purchase your volumes at a doctor's fee, or two fees each if you fix it so. Some of your books I possess, and the advantage I have received from the study of them makes me desirous that they should be more widely known and read. Commerce is too often a dishonest selfish scramble: employers and employed are at variance when their interests are identical. Daily toil does not obliterate our taste for art, and is it not desirable that those who have the means to gratify that taste should be able to know the right and the wrong in it, and recognize noble art when they see it? Upon all this you have written much in your books, but if the books are not known, it is as if unwritten, or even worse, because it is needful work not doing the good it might do.

Your *Fors* series of letters are almost unknown to those to whom you have addressed them. I heard of them six months after their commencement, because some "able editor" was short of copy, and endeavoured to be clever at your

* If that be so, booksellers are of no use in the world, and ought to be abolished. Am I to give my buyers unnecessary trouble that booksellers may live? [*Author's note.*]

expense. Sir, I hope you will reconsider this matter,—what possible harm could it do to simply announce the publication of a volume or a letter in a few newspapers or magazines? It is certainly a mistake that the knowledge of a newly-issued volume should depend upon the exigencies of foolish editors or the popular relish for their highly-spiced rubbish.

I hate anonymous letters, and you can have my address if you want it. I read the other day if any one dared to expostulate with you that you would gibbet him. What that means, I know not. Something awful, no doubt. So I merely subscribe myself,

Sir,

Your very humble servant,

———.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

**The Mount of Compassion**
**And Coronation of its Builder**

**Drawn thus by Sandro Botticelli**

## LETTER 22

### THE MOUNT OF COMPASSION[1]

BRANTWOOD, *19th September*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—I am to-day to begin explaining to you the meaning of my own books, which, some people will tell you, is an egotistical and impertinent thing for an author to do. My own view of the matter is, that it is generally more egotistical and impertinent to explain the meaning of other people's books,—which, nevertheless, at this day in England, many young and inexperienced persons are paid for pretending to do. What intents I have had, myself, therefore, in this *Fors Clavigera*, and some other lately published writings, I will take on me to tell you, without more preamble.

2. And first, for their little vignette stamp of roses on title-page. It is copied from the clearest bit of the pattern of the petticoat of Spring, where it is drawn tight over her thigh, in Sandro Botticelli's picture of her, at Florence.[2] I drew it on the wood myself, and Mr. Burgess cut it; and it is on all my title-pages, because whatever I now write is meant to help in founding the society called of "Monte Rosa";—see § 6 of the seventeenth of these letters. Such reference hereafter, observe, is only thus printed (17, § 6[3]).

3. And I copied this vignette from Sandro Botticelli, for two reasons: first, that no man has ever yet drawn, and none is likely to draw for many a day, roses as well as Sandro has drawn them; secondly, because he was the only painter of Italy who thoroughly felt and understood

[1] [See below, § 22.]

[2] [For other references to the picture, see Vol. XXII. pp. 19, 430; Vol. XXIII. p. xlix., and Vol. XXIV. p. 453.]

[3] [Originally, the *Page* and not the *Section* was given: see above, p. 235 *n.*]

Dante; and the only one also who understood the thoughts of Heathens and Christians equally, and could in a measure paint both Aphrodite and the Madonna. So that he is, on the whole, the most universal of painters; and, take him all in all, the greatest Florentine workman: and I wish you to know with Dante's opinions, his, also, on all subjects of importance to you, of which Florentines could judge.

And of his life, it is proper for you immediately to know thus much:[1] or at least, that so much was current gossip about it in Vasari's time,—that, when he was a boy, he obstinately refused to learn either to read, write, or sum (and I heartily wish all boys would and could do the same, till they were at least as old as the illiterate Alfred);[2] whereupon his father, "disturbed by these eccentric habits of his son, turned him over in despair to a gossip of his, called Botticello, who was a goldsmith."[3]

4. And on this, note two things: the first, that all the great early Italian masters of painting and sculpture, without exception, began by being goldsmiths' apprentices;[4] the second, that they all felt themselves so indebted to, and formed by the master-craftsman who had mainly disciplined their fingers, whether in work on gold or marble, that they practically considered him their father, and took *his* name rather than their own; so that most of the great Italian workmen are now known, not by their own names, but by those of their masters,* the master being himself often entirely forgotten by the public, and eclipsed by his pupil; but immortal *in* his pupil, and named in his name.[5] Thus, our Sandro, Alessandro, or Alexander's own name was

* Or of their native towns or villages,—these being recognized as masters, also.

[1] [With the following passages of this letter, compare *Ariadne Florentina*, Lecture vi., where also Ruskin gives account of Botticelli's life and work (Vol. XXII. pp. 425 *seq.*). See also *The Schools of Florence*, Vol. XXIII. pp. 265 *seq.*]

[2] [For the youth of Alfred the Great, see *Pleasures of England*, §§ 103–106.]

[3] [Vasari; vol. ii. p. 230 (Bohn).]

[4] [Compare, again, *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 123, 188 (Vol. XXII. pp. 377, 427); and for Botticelli, Vol. XXIII. pp. 265–266.]

[5] [See, once more, *Ariadne Florentina*, § 65 (Vol. XXII. pp. 340, 341 *n.*).]

Filipepi; which name you never heard of, I suppose, till now: nor I, often, but his master's was Botticello; of which master we nevertheless know only that he so formed, and informed, this boy, that thenceforward the boy thought it right to be called "Botticello's Sandro," and nobody else's. Which in Italian is Sandro di Botticello; and that is abbreviated into Sandro Botticelli. So, Francesco Francia is short for Francesco di Francia, or "Francia's Francis," though nobody ever heard, except thus, of his master the goldsmith, Francia. But his own name was Raibolini. So, Philip Brunelleschi is short for Brunellesco's Philip, Brunellesco being his father's *Christian* name, to show how much he owed to his father's careful training (the family name was Lippo); and, which is the prettiest instance of all, "Piero della Francesca," means "Francesca's Peter"; because he was chiefly trained by his mother, Francesca. All of which I beg you to take to heart, and meditate on, concerning Mastership and Pupilage.

5. But to return to Sandro.

Having learned prosperously how to manage gold, he takes a fancy to know how to manage colour; and is put by his good father under, as it chanced, the best master in Florence, or the world, at that time—the Monk Lippi, whose work is the finest, out and out, that ever monk did; which I attribute, myself, to what is usually considered faultful in him,—his having run away with a pretty novice out of a convent.[1] I am not jesting, I assure you, in the least; but how can I possibly help the nature of things, when *that* chances to be laughable? Nay, if you think of it, perhaps you will not find it so laughable that Lippi should be the only monk (if this be a fact), who ever did good painter's work.[2]

Be that as it may, Lippi and his pupil were happy in each other; and the boy soon became a smiter of colour,

[1] [On this subject, compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 185 and *n.* (Vol. XXII. p. 424).]

[2] [But see what Ruskin said after further study of Fra Angelico: Vol. XXIII. pp. 253 *seq.*, Vol. XXIV. p. 451.]

7. And in the course of the first year's letters, I tried gradually to illustrate to you certain general propositions, which, if I had set them down in form at once, might have seemed to you too startling, or disputable, to be discussed with patience. So I tried to lead you into some discussion of them first, and now hope that you may endure the clearer statement of them, as follows:—

PROPOSITION I. (1, § 1).—The English nation is beginning another group of ten years, empty in purse, empty in stomach, and in a state of terrified hostility, to every other nation under the sun.

I assert this very firmly and seriously. But in the course of these papers every important assertion on the opposite side shall be fairly inserted; so that you may consider of them at your leisure. Here is one, for instance, from the *Morning Post* of Saturday, August 31, of this year:—

"The country is at the present moment in a state of such unexampled prosperity that it is actually suffering from the very superabundance of its riches. . . . Coals and meat are at famine prices, we are threatened with a strike among the bakers, and there is hardly a single department of industry in which the cost of production has not been enhanced."[1]

This is exceedingly true; the *Morning Post* ought to have congratulated you further on the fact that the things produced by this greater cost are now usually good for nothing. Hear on this head, what Mr. Emerson said of us, even so far back as 1856 (and we have made much inferior articles since then):—

"England is aghast at the disclosure of her fraud in the adulteration of food, of drugs, and of almost every fabric in her mills and shops; finding that milk will not nourish, nor sugar sweeten, nor bread satisfy, nor pepper bite the tongue, nor glue stick. In true England all is false and forged. . . . It is rare to find a merchant who knows why a crisis occurs in trade,—why prices rise or fall, or who knows the mischief of paper money.* In the culmination of National Prosperity, in the annexation of countries; building of ships, depôts, towns; in the influx of tons of gold

* Or the use of it, Mr. Emerson should have added.

[1] [For later references to this passage, see Letters 73, § 7, and 86, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 18, 340).]

and silver; amid the chuckle of chancellors and financiers, it was found that bread rose to famine prices, that the yeoman was forced to sell his cow and pig, his tools, and his acre of land; and the dreadful barometer of the poor-rates was touching the point of ruin." *

8. PROPOSITION II. (1, §§ 2, 3).—Of such prosperity I, for one, have seen enough, and will endure it no longer quietly; but will set aside some part of my income to help, if anybody else will join me, in forming a National Store instead of a National Debt; and will explain to you as I have time and power, how to avoid such distress in future, by adhering to the elementary principles of Human Economy, which have been of late wilfully entombed under pyramids of falsehood.

"Wilfully"; note this grave word in my second proposition; and invest a shilling in the purchase of *Bishop Berkeley on Money*, being extracts from his *Querist*, by James Harvey, Liverpool.† At the bottom of the twenty-first page you will find this query, "Whether the continuous efforts on the part of the *Times*, the *Telegraph*,‡ the *Economist*, the *Daily News*, and the daily newspaper press, and also of moneyed men generally, to confound money and capital, be the result of ignorance or design."

Of ignorance in great part, doubtless, for "moneyed men, generally," are ignorant enough to believe and assert anything; but it is noticeable that their ignorance always tells on their own side;§ and the *Times* and *Economist* are now nothing more than passive instruments in their hands. But neither they, nor their organs, would long be able to assert untruths in Political Economy, if the nominal

* *English Traits* (ROUTLEDGE, 1856), p. 95.

† PROVOST, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden.[1]

‡ The *Telegraph* has always seemed to me to play fairer than the rest.[2] The words "daily newspaper press" are, of course, too general.

§ Compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 140 [Vol. XVII. p. 265].

[1] [Bishop Berkeley published his *Querist* in 1710. The questions in it which refer to money, and which are reprinted in Mr. Harvey's pamphlet (1872), were suggested by the excitement caused by the South Sea schemes. To Berkeley's queries (pp. 1–14) Mr. Harvey adds others of his own (pp. 15–23).]

[2] [Compare above, p. 166; and below, p. 499.]

England, be it just or unjust, until it is by due and peaceful deliberation altered, if alteration of it be needful; and to be sure that you are able and willing to obey good laws, before you seek to alter unjust ones (2, § 22). For you cannot know whether they are unjust or not until you are just yourselves. Also, your race of squires, considered merely as an animal one, is very precious; and you had better see what use you can make of it, before you let it fall extinct, like the Dodo's. For none other such exists in any part of this round little world: and, once destroyed, it will be long before it develops itself again from Mr. Darwin's germ-cells.

12. PROPOSITION VI. (5, § 21).—But, if you can, honestly, you had better become minute squires yourselves. The law of England nowise forbids your buying any land which the squires are willing to part with, for such savings as you may have ready. And the main proposal made to you in this book is that you should so economize till you can indeed become diminutive squires, and develop accordingly into some proportionate fineness of race.[1]

13. PROPOSITION VII. (2, § 5).—But it is perhaps not equally necessary to take care of your capitalists, or so-called "Employers." For your real employer is the public; and the so-called employer is only a mediator between the public and you, whose mediation is perhaps more costly than need be, to you both. So that it will be well for you to consider how far, without such intervention, you may succeed in employing *yourselves;* and my seventh proposition is accordingly that some of you, and all, in some proportion, should be diminutive capitalists, as well as diminutive squires, yet under a novel condition, as follows:—

14. PROPOSITION VIII.—Observe, first, that in the ancient and hitherto existent condition of things, the squire is essentially an idle person who has possession of land, and lends it, but does not use it; and the capitalist is essentially an idle person, who has possession of tools, and lends them, but does not use them; while the labourer, by definition, is a

[1] [For a later reference to Propositions V. and VI., see Letter 73, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 17).]

laborious person, and by presumption, a penniless one, who is obliged to borrow both land and tools; and paying, for rent on the one, and profit on the other, what will maintain the squire and capitalist, digs finally a remnant of roots, wherewith to maintain himself.

These may, in so brief form, sound to you very radical and International[1] definitions. I am glad, therefore, that (though entirely accurate) they are not mine, but Professor Fawcett's. You will find them quoted from his *Manual of Political Economy* at § 8 of my eleventh letter [p. 188]. He does not, indeed, in the passage there quoted, define the capitalist as the possessor of tools, but he does so quite clearly at the end of the fable quoted in 1, § 18,—"The plane is the symbol of all capital," and the paragraph given in 11, § 8, is, indeed, a most faithful statement of the present condition of things, which is, practically, that rich people are paid for being rich, and idle people are paid for being idle, and busy people taxed for being busy. Which does not appear to me a state of matters much longer tenable; but rather, and this is my 8th Proposition (11, § 18), that land should belong to those who can use *it*, and tools to those who can use *them;* or, as a less revolutionary, and instantly practicable, proposal, that those who have land and tools—should use them.

15. PROPOSITION IX. and last:—To know the "use" either of land or tools, you must know what useful things can be grown from the one, and made with the other. And therefore to know what is useful, and what useless, and be skilful to provide the one, and wise to scorn the other, is the first need for all industrious men. Wherefore, I propose that schools should be established, wherein the use of land and tools shall be taught conclusively:—in other words, the sciences of agriculture (with associated river and sea-culture); and the noble arts and exercises of humanity.

[1] [The reference is to the International Association of Working Men, founded by Karl Marx in 1864, which was at this time holding a conference at The Hague. The meaning of the word in the text has hitherto been obscured by being printed without a capital I. For another reference to the "International," see Vol. XXIX. p. 252 *n.*]

16. Now you cannot but see how impossible it would have been for me, in beginning these letters, to have started with a formal announcement of these their proposed contents, even now startling enough, probably, to some of my readers, after nearly two years' preparatory talk. You must see also how in speaking of so wide a subject, it is not possible to complete the conversation respecting each part of it at once, and set that aside; but it is necessary to touch on each head by little and little. Yet in the course of desultory talk, I have been endeavouring to exhibit to you, essentially, these six following things, namely,—A, the general character and use of squires; B, the general character and mischievousness of capitalists; C, the nature of money; D, the nature of useful things; E, the methods of finance which obtain money; and F, the methods of work which obtain useful things.

17. To these "six points"[1] I have indeed directed my own thoughts, and endeavoured to direct yours, perseveringly, throughout these letters, though to each point as the Third Fors might dictate; that is to say, as light was thrown upon it in my mind by what might be publicly taking place at the time, or by any incident happening to me personally. Only it chanced that in the course of the first year, 1871, one thing which publicly took place, namely the siege and burning of Paris, was of interest so unexpected that it necessarily broke up what little consistency of plan I had formed, besides putting me into a humour in which I could only write incoherently; deep domestic vexation occurring to me at the same time, till I fell ill, and my letters and vexations had like to have ended together. So I must now patch the torn web as best I can, by giving you reference to what bears on each of the above six heads in the detached talk of these twenty months (and I hope also a serviceable index at the two years' end[2]); and, if the work goes on,—But I had better keeps all Ifs out of it.

[1] [The reference is to the Six Points of the "People's Charter," 1838.]
[2] [See Vol. XXIX.]

18. Meantime, with respect to point A, the general character and use of squires, you will find the meaning of the word "Squire" given in 2, § 4, as being threefold, like that of Fors. First, it means a rider; or in more full and perfect sense, a master or governor of beasts: signifying that a squire has fine sympathy with all beasts of the field, and understanding of their natures complete enough to enable him to govern them for their good, and be king over all creatures, subduing the noxious ones, and cherishing the virtuous ones. Which is the primal meaning of chivalry, the horse, as the noblest, because trainablest, of wild creatures, being taken for a type of them all. Read on this point, 9, § 11, and if you can see my larger books, at your library, § 205 of *Aratra Pentelici;* and the last lecture in *Eagle's Nest.**[1] And observe farther that it follows from what is noted in those places, that to be a good squire, one must have the instincts of animals as well as those of men; but that the typical squire is apt to err somewhat on the lower side, and occasionally to have the instincts of animals *instead* of those of men.

19. Secondly. The word "Squire" means a Shield-bearer; — properly, the bearer of some superior person's shield; but at all events, the declarer, by legend, of good deserving and good intention, either others' or his own; with accompanying statement of his resolution to defend and maintain the same; and that so persistently that, rather than lose his shield, he is to make it his death-bed; and so honourably and without thought of vulgar gain, that it is the last blame of base governments to become "shield-sellers" (compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 127[2]). On this

* Compare also Mr. Maurice's sermon for the fourth Sunday after Trinity in Vol. II. of third series. (SMITH, ELDER & Co., no date.[3])

[1] [Vol. XX. p. 351, and Vol. XXII. pp. 265–287.]

[2] [Vol. XVII. p. 251.]

[3] [The date is 1870. *Sermons*, by the Rev. F. D. Maurice, Third Series, 2 vols. See vol. ii. pp. 179 *seq.*, a sermon on "The Glory and Deliverance of the Animal Nature," on the text "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, redemption of the body" (Romans viii. 23). For Maurice, see below, p. 388.]

part of the Squire's character I have not yet been able to insist at any length; but you will find partial suggestion of the manner in which you may thus become yourselves shield-bearers, in *Time and Tide*, §§ 72, 78,[1] and I shall soon have the elementary copies in my Oxford schools published, and you may then learn, if you will, somewhat of shield-drawing and painting.[2]

20. And thirdly, the word "Squire" means a Carver, properly a carver at some one else's feast; and typically, has reference to the Squire's duty as a Carver at *all* men's feasts, being Lord of Land, and therefore giver of Food; in which function his lady, as you have heard now often enough (first from Carlyle), is properly styled Loaf-giver;[3] her duty being, however, first of all to find out where all loaves come from; for, quite retaining his character in the other two respects, the typical squire is apt to fail in this, and to become rather a loaf-eater, or consumer, than giver (compare 10, §§ 4 and 18); though even in that capacity the enlightened press of your day thinks you cannot do without him (7, § 14). Therefore, for analysis of what he has been, and may be, I have already specified to you certain squires, whose history I wish you to know and think over (with many others in due course: but, for the present, those already specified are enough), namely, the Theseus of the Elgin Marbles and *Midsummer Night's Dream* (2, § 2); the best and unfortunatest * of the Kings of France, "St. Louis" (3, § 7); the best and unfortunatest of the Kings of England, Henry II. (3, § 9); the

* In calling a man pre-eminently unfortunate, I do not mean that, as compared with others, he is absolutely less prosperous; but that he is one who has met with the least help or the greatest hostility, from the Third Fors, *in proportion* to the wisdom of his purposes, and virtue of his character.

[1] [Vol. XVII. p. 379.]

[2] [The reference is to the intended "Oxford Art School Series": see Vol. XXI. pp. 311–315.]

[3] [See Carlyle's *Past and Present*, passim, for "the sacred mission of a Land Aristocracy." For the etymology of "lord" and "lady," see Vol. XVIII. p. 138 *n.*, Vol. XX. pp. 18–19 *n.*; and compare Letters 45, § 17 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 162), and 93, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 471–472).]

Lion-heart of England (8, § 10); Edward III. of England and his lion's whelp (4, § 10); again and again the two Second Friedrichs, of Germany and Prussia;[1] Sir John Hawkwood (1, § 5, and 15, § 13); Sir Thomas More (7, § 6); Sir Francis Drake (13, § 12); and Sir Richard Grenville (9, § 10). Now all these squires are alike in their high quality of captainship over man and beast; they were pre-eminently the best men of their surrounding groups of men; and the guides of their people, faithfully recognized for such (unless when their people got drunk, which sometimes happened, with sorrowful issue), and all equality with them seen to be divinely impossible. (Compare 14, § 4.) And that most of them lived by thieving does not, under the conditions of their day, in any wise detract from their virtue, or impair their delightfulness (any more than it does that of your, on the whole I suppose, favourite, Englishman, and nomadic Squire of Sherwood, Robin Hode or Hood); the theft, or piracy, as it might happen, being always effected with a good conscience, and in an open, honourable, and merciful manner.[2] Thus, in the account of Sir Francis's third voyage, which was "faithfully taken out of the reports of Mr. Christofer Ceely, Ellis Hixon, and others who were in the same voyage with him, by Philip Nichols, preacher,"[3] revised and annotated by Sir Francis himself, and set forth by his nephew, what I told you about his proceedings on the coast of Spanish America (13, § 12) is thus summed:—

"There were at this time belonging to Carthagene, Nombre de Dios, Rio Grand, Santa Martha, Rio de Hacha, Venta Cruz, Veragua, Nicaragua,

[1] [See, for instance, for the Emperor Frederick II. of Germany, pp. 260, 365 n., 621; and for Frederick the Great of Prussia, pp. 47, 244.]

[2] [Compare Letters 7, § 13; 14, § 1; and 31, § 15 (pp. 127, 243, 577).]

[3] [The inverted commas are here inserted as they are part of the title-page of *Sir Francis Drake Revived: Calling upon this Dull or Effeminate Age to follow his Noble Steps for Golde and Silver, by this Memorable Relation of the Rare Occurrences (never yet declared to the world) in a Third Voyage. . . . Faithfully taken out . . . preacher. Reviewed also by Sir Francis Drake himselfe before his Death, and much holpen and enlarged, by divers Notes, with his owne hand here and there inserted. Set forth by Sir Francis Drake, Baronet (his nephew now living)*: London, 1626. Ruskin's quotation is from pp. 93, 94. The insertion "(people?)" is Ruskin's.]

the Honduras, Jamaica, etc., about two hundred frigates,* some of a hundred and twenty tunnes, other but of tenne or twelve tunne, but the most of thirty or forty tunne, which all had entercourse between Carthagene and Nombre de Dios, the most of which, during our abode in those parts, wee tooke, and some of them twice or thrice each, yet never burnt nor suncke any, unless they were made out men-of-warre against us. . . . Many strange birds, beastes, and fishes, besides fruits, trees, plants and the like were seene and observed of us in this journey, which, willingly, wee pretermit, as hastening to the end of our voyage, which from this Cape of St. Anthony wee intended to finish by sayling the directest and speediest way homeward, and accordingly even beyonde our owne expectation most happily performed. For whereas our captaine had purposed to touch at New-found-land, and there to have watered, which would have been some let unto us, though wee stood in great want of water, yet God Almighty so provided for us, by giving us good store of raine water, that wee were sufficiently furnished; and within twenty-three dayes wee past from the Cape of Florida to the Iles of Silley, and so arrived at Plimouth on Sunday, about sermon-time, August the Ninth, 1573, at what time the newes of our captaine's returne brought unto his" (people?) "did so speedily pass over all the church, and surpass their mindes with desire and delight to see him, that very fewe or none remained with the preacher, all hastening to see the evidence of God's love and blessing towards our gracious Queene and countrey, by the fruite of our captaine's labour and successe. Soli Deo gloria."

I am curious to know, and hope to find, that the deserted preacher was Mr. Philip Nichols, the compiler afterwards of this log-book of Sir Francis.[1]

21. Putting out of the question, then, this mode of their livelihood, you will find all these squires essentially "captaines," head, or chief persons, occupied in maintaining good order, and putting things to rights, so that they naturally become chief Lawyers without Wigs (otherwise called Kings) in the districts accessible to them. Of whom I have named first, the Athenian Theseus, "setter to rights,"

* Italian "fregata," I believe "polished-sided" ship, for swiftness, "fricata"; but the derivation is uncertain.[2]

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[1] [This, however, seems not to have been the case. The Philip Nichols, who is credited with editing Drake's voyage, had a benefice in the diocese of Wells. Little, however, is known of him: see the *Dictionary of National Biography*.]

[2] ["The ultimate etymology is unknown, the hypothesis of Diez, that it represents a late Latin *fabricata*, in the sense 'building' (*cf.* French *bâtiment*, building, ship), being generally rejected by recent scholars" (Murray's *New English Dictionary*).]

or "settler," his name means; he being both the founder of the first city whose history you are to know,[1] and the first true Ruler of beasts: for his mystic contest with the Minotaur is the fable through which the Greeks taught what they knew of the more terrible and mysterious relations between the lower creatures and man; and the desertion of him by Ariadne (for indeed he never deserted her, but she him,—involuntarily, poor sweet maid,—Death calling her in Diana's name[2]) is the conclusive stroke against him by the Third Fors.

22. Of this great squire, then, you shall really have some account in next letter.[3] I have only further time now to tell you that this month's frontispiece is a facsimile of two separate parts of an engraving originally executed by Sandro Botticelli.[4] An impression of Sandro's own plate is said to exist in the Vatican;[5] I have never seen one. The ordinarily extant impressions are assuredly from an inferior plate, a copy of Botticelli's. But his manner of engraving has been imitated by the copyist as far as he understood it, and the important qualities of the design are so entirely preserved that the work has often been assigned to the master himself.

It represents the seven works of Mercy, as completed by an eighth work in the centre of all; namely, lending without interest, from the Mount of Pity accumulated by generous alms. In the upper part of the design are seen the shores of Italy, with the cities which first built Mounts

[1] [See Letter 8, § 10 (p. 143). Ruskin derives the name "Theseus" from *τίθημι*, the settler, civiliser.]

[2] [Ruskin follows the Homeric version of the tale (see *Odyssey*, xi. 324), according to which Theseus carried Ariadne with him to the isle of Naxos, where she was slain by Artemis (see below, p. 429). According to other versions, he deserted her in the isle (Plutarch, *Theseus*, 20; Ovid, *Metam.*, viii. 175).]

[3] [See below, pp. 402 *seq.*]

[4] [The ascription to Botticelli must be considered uncertain; for other notice of the plate (of which there is an impression in the British Museum), see *Ariadne Florentina*, Vol. XXII. p. 439 *n.* On the history of the plate, and the subject of it, see Ottley as there cited; also *Introduction to a Catalogue of the Early Italian Prints in the British Museum*, by Richard Fisher, 1886, pp. 141–147. Mr. Fisher quotes the present passage in *Fors*, and accepts the print as being from Botticelli's design.]

[5] [See Ottley's *History of Engraving*, vol. i. p. 427.]

of Pity: Venice, chief of all;—then Florence, Genoa, and Castruccio's Lucca; in the distance prays the monk of Ancona, who first thought—inspired of heaven—of such war with usurers; and an angel crowns him, as you see. The little dashes, which form the dark background, represent waves of the Adriatic; and they, as well as all the rest, are rightly and manfully engraved, though you may not think it; but I have no time to-day to give you a lecture on engraving, nor to tell you the story of Mounts of Pity, which is too pretty to be spoiled by haste;[1] but I hope to get something of Theseus and Frederick the Second, preparatorily, into next letter.[2] Meantime I must close this one by answering two requests, which, though made to me privately, I think it right to state my reasons for refusing, publicly.

28. The first was indeed rather the offer of an honour to me, than a request, in the proposal that I should contribute to the Maurice Memorial Fund.[3]

I loved Mr. Maurice, learned much from him, worked under his guidance and authority,[4] and have deep regard and respect for some persons whose names I see on the Memorial Committee.

But I must decline joining them; first, because I dislike all memorials, as such;[5] thinking that no man who deserves

[1] [The story was not told in *Fors Clavigera*, but there is mention of it in *Ariadne Florentina* (Vol. XXII. pp. 438–440), as already stated above, p. 365.]

[2] [For Theseus, see below, pp. 402 *seq.*; but there was nothing of the Emperor Frederick II. got in.]

[3] [Frederick Denison Maurice (Broad Churchman, Christian Socialist, and founder of the Working Men's College) had died in April 1872. A petition to the Dean and Chapter, asking that he should be buried in Westminster Abbey, received the signatures of men of weight, but his family opposed the suggestion. He was buried at Highgate on April 5, and a committee was formed to place a memorial of him in the Abbey. The bust (by Woolner) is in the south-west tower or Baptistery. The memorial that would have pleased him most, says his son and biographer (Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, K.C.B.), was expressed by Dr. Montagu Butler in these words: "Wherever rich and poor are brought closer together, wherever men learn to think more worthily of God in Christ, the great work that he has laboured at for nearly fifty years shall be spoken of as a memorial of him" (*Life of Frederick Denison Maurice*, 1884, vol. ii. p. 643).]

[4] [Compare *Præterita*, iii. § 13 *seq.*; and for Ruskin's work for Maurice at the Working Men's College, see Vol. V. pp. xxxvi. *seq.*]

[5] [See, however, Vol. XVI. p. 229, and the note there given.]

them, needs them: and secondly, because, though I affectionately remember and honour Mr. Maurice, I have no mind to put his bust in Westminster Abbey. For I do not think of him as one of the great, or even one of the leading, men of the England of his day; but only as the centre of a group of students whom his amiable sentimentalism at once exalted and stimulated, while it relieved them from any painful necessities of exact scholarship in divinity. And as he was always honest (at least in intention) and unfailingly earnest and kind, he was harmless and soothing in error, and vividly helpful when unerring. I have above referred you,[1] and most thankfully, to his sermon on the relations of man to inferior creatures; and I can quite understand how pleasant it was for a disciple panic-struck by the literal aspect of the doctrine of justification by faith, to be told, in an earlier discourse,[2] that "We speak of an anticipation as justified by the event. Supposing that anticipation to be something so inward, so essential to me, that my own very existence is involved in it, *I* am justified by it." But consolatory equivocations of this kind have no enduring place in literature; nor has Mr. Maurice more real right to a niche in Westminster Abbey than any other tender-hearted Christian gentleman, who has successfully, for a time, promoted the charities of his faith, and parried its discussion.

24. I have been also asked to contribute to the purchase of the Alexandra Park;[3] and I will not: and beg you, my working readers, to understand, once for all, that I wish your *homes* to be comfortable, and refined; and that I will resist, to the utmost of my power, all schemes founded on

[1] [See above, p. 383 *n.*]

[2] [*Sermons*, Third Series, vol. ii. p. 23; a sermon for the Second Sunday after Easter on "God the Justifier of Man."]

[3] [The Alexandra Palace and Park, Muswell Hill, was designed as a Crystal Palace for North London. The enterprise was at this time in difficulties, and a Mansion House Committee had been formed to collect a guarantee fund (*Times*, October 4, 1872). The Palace was opened on May 24, 1873, and burnt down on June 9.]

the vile modern notion that you are to be crowded in kennels till you are nearly dead (in order that other people may make money by your work), and then taken out in squads by tramway and railway, to be revived and refined by science and art. Your first business is to make your homes healthy and delightful: then, keep your wives and children there, and let your return to *them* be your daily "holy day."[1]

Ever faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] [See above, Letter 10, § 13 (p. 174).]

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

**25.** The subjoined letter is from a clergyman of the Church of England; I publish it with his permission, advising him at the same time to withhold his name, as the arguments he has brought forward are those which would generally occur to a mind ecclesiastically trained:—

"10*th September*, 1872.

"Sir,—At § 18 of the 21st letter of your *Fors Clavigera* [p. 363] you tell the working men and labourers of this country that 'lending for gain is sinful'; and you intimate, as I gather, that this is the teaching of the Bible. May I, therefore, be allowed to submit that this unqualified assertion, with its world-wide consequences, is not true?

"In Deut. xxiii. 20, you will find these words: 'Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury.' And the margin (*a*), for the scope and meaning of this word 'stranger,' refers you to Deut. x. 19, which says, 'Love ye therefore the stranger.' And the margin (*b*) refers us also to Lev. xix. 35, which enjoins us to 'love the stranger' *as ourselves*.

"So that we are thus plainly taught—

"I. That the lending upon usury *cannot be in itself a sin*, or God (*c*) could not have allowed it in any case whatsoever, any more than He could have allowed theft or lying (*d*).

"II. That the lending to the stranger was not incompatible with the command, 'Love ye the stranger,' or else God, in the laws and writings given by Moses, at one and the same time, stultifies and contradicts Himself (*e*).

"III. That the laws forbidding usury, like the laws for preserving estates to their families by the year of Jubilee, and like the laws which bound Israelitish servants until the 'year of release,' were peculiar and exclusive, and concerned only that people living in a peculiar and exclusive way. Outside that little patch of territory, but the size of our two largest English counties, the Jews were expressly told they might lend upon usury; and this at the same time that they were enjoined to love the stranger, and not to 'oppress the stranger' (*f*).

"Says old *Cruden's Concordance*:—'It seems as lawful for me to receive interest for money, which another takes pain with, improves, but runs the hazard of in trade, as it is to receive rent for my land, which another takes pain with, improves, but runs the hazard of in husbandry.' What should we think of discovering in the holy books of some recently found people, a God so eccentric that he allowed you to invest money in tea, or sugar, or iron, or cotton, and get fifteen or even twenty per cent. out of it, and this from poor and rich alike, with whom you traded; but threatened you with his condemnation and everlasting displeasure if, at the same time, you helped a deserving man to commence business by lending him money at four per cent.; or lent money to your country until such time as it could pay its debts, for a moderate compensation, which would prevent you and yours from being ruined? (*g*) Love of self is as lawful as love of neighbour—

'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' My neighbour is as much bound to give me some portion of the interest or gain he has earned with my money, as he would be chargeable with selfishness and grasping if he kept it wholly for himself. Trading much more whets the appetite for gain than the taking moderate interest for money. Would our Lord have held up that which was wicked in itself for our imitation, as he has done in Matt. xxv. 27, if lending upon interest were sinful? (*h*) Nothing but this sight of the taking one portion of the Bible without the other, and then summing up and pronouncing judgment upon a portion of the evidence only, thus arriving at an unsound judgment, would have led me to trouble you with these lines.

"I remain, Sir,
"Yours faithfully."

(*a*), (*b*), and (*c*). My correspondent uses "God" and "the margin" a synonymous terms. May I be allowed to submit to him that they are not the same, and that my statement involved no reference to either? My assertion is respecting the Bible; and has no reference either to its margin, or to God:—and my assertion is simply that "usury," in the language of the Bible, means any percentage, however small, on lent money. I have made no assertion myself as to the characters assigned to it, for I have not examined them. I know that usury is sinful, as I know that theft is, and have no need of inquiring whether the Bible says so or not, but Ezekiel 18th[1] is sufficiently explicit.

(*d*). Why does not my correspondent say "theft, lying, *or murder*"? The occupation of the land of Canaan was one colossal theft; the prophetess-Judge of Israel gave enthusiastic benediction, in one and the same person, to the firmness of the hand of the murderess, and fineness of the art of the liar; and the first monarch of Israel forfeited his throne, because after having faithfully slain the men, women, children, sucklings, and domestic animals of a hostile tribe, he faithlessly spared their king, and serviceablest cattle.[2]

(*e*). The writings commonly assumed to be given by Moses very certainly contradict themselves in many places. It is my correspondent's conclusion, not mine, that therefore God does so.

(*f*). The Jews have accordingly carried out their love to the stranger (though I beg my correspondent to observe that stranger is not the same word as Gentile) by making as much money out of him as they can, in all places and on all occasions. But it does not follow, either that they have been blessed in doing so, or that Christians are therefore justified in treating each other either as strangers or Jews.

(*g*). A singular instance of the looseness of thought possible respecting matters to which we are accustomed. A man is not ruined, because he can get no gain by lending his money. No one objects to his keeping it in his pocket.

(*h*). Presumably, the unjust steward's modification of his master's accounts was also virtuous?[3]

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[1] ["He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase," etc.; verse 8.]

[2] [See Judges v. and 1 Samuel xv. 7-9.]

[3] [See Luke xvi.]

26. I have not time to ask Mr. Sillar's permission, but hope his pardon for assuming it, to print the following portion of a letter I have had very great pleasure in receiving from him:—

"You wrong me in saying[1] I have entirely given myself up to this question. I am occupied in saving our lovely streams from pollution, and endeavouring (no easy task, I assure you) to put in daily practice, the principles you teach. I wish you could see our works at Crossness.

"The reason why I *exclusively* attack this vice is because it is the only one which is not attacked from the pulpit. Men do not know even that it is a vice. I have such confidence in the integrity of Englishmen that I believe they would at once discountenance it if they had the least idea of its character and mischievous nature."

[1] [See above, p. 363.]

## LETTER 28

### THE LABYRINTH[1]

BRANTWOOD, *October 24th*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—At breakfast this morning, which I was eating sulkily, because I had final press-corrections to do on *Fors* (and the last are always worst to do, being without repentance), I took up the *Pall Mall Gazette* for the 21st, and chanced on two things, of which one much interested, the other much pleased me, and both are to our present purpose.

What interested me was the statement in the column of "This Evening's News," made by a gentleman much acquainted with naval business, that "Mr. Goschen is the one man to whom, and to whom alone, we can as a nation look even for permission to retain our power at sea."[2]

Whether entirely, or, as I apprehend, but partially, true, this statement is a remarkable one to appear in the journals of a nation which has occupied its mind lately chiefly on the subject of its liberties; and I cannot but wonder what Sir Francis Drake would have thought of such a piece of Evening's News, communicated in form to *him?*

2. What he would have thought—if you can fancy it —would be very proper for you also to think, and much to our eventual purpose. But the part of the contents of the *Pall Mall* which I found to bear on the subject of this letter, was the "address by a mangled convict to a

[1] [A rejected title for this letter was "The House that Jack Built": see below, § 10.]

[2] [A paragraph summarising a letter in the *Times* of October 21, 1872, by Mr. (afterwards Sir) E. J. Reed, C.B., Chief Constructor of the Navy (1863–1870). Mr. Goschen, who had been President of the Poor Law Board from 1868 to 1870 (for a reference to him in that capacity, see above, Letter 4, p. 70), became in 1871 First Lord of the Admiralty.]

benevolent gentleman."[1] The Third Fors must assuredly have determined that this letter should be pleasing to the Touchstone mind,—the gods will have it poetical;[2] it ends already with rhyme, and must begin in like manner, for these first twelve verses of the address are much too precious to be lost among "news," whether of morning or evening.

"Mr. P. Taylor, honnered Sir,
Accept these verses I indict,
Thanks to a gentle mother dear
Which taught these infant hands to rite.

"And thanks unto the Chaplin here,
A heminent relidjous man,
As kind a one as ever dipt
A beke into the flowing can.

"He pointes out to me most clear
How sad and sinfull is my ways,
And numerous is the briney tear
Which for that man I nigtly prays.

"'Cohen,' he ses, in sech a voice!
'Your lot is hard, your stripes is sore;
But Cohen,' he ses, 'rejoice! rejoice!
And never never steale no more!'

"His langwidge is so kind and good,
It works so strong on me inside,
I woold not do it if I coold,
I coold not do it if I tryed.

"Ah, wence this moisteur in my eye?
Whot makes me turn agin my food?
O, Mister Taylor, ask not why,
Ime so cut up with gratitood.

"Fansy a gentleman like you,
No paultry Beak, but a M.P.,
A riggling in your heasy chair
The riggles they put onto me.

[1] [The inverted commas are here inserted, as the words are the heading given to the (unsigned) skit in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. P. A. Taylor (1819–1891) was Radical M.P. for Leicester (1862–1884); an opponent of capital punishment, the lash, etc. The *Times* of October 8 contains a notice of the flogging of two prisoners (one of them named Cohen) who had been sentenced to thirty and twenty-five lashes, in addition to penal servitude, for highway robberies with violence.]

[2] [*As You Like It*, Act iii. sc. 3.]

"I see thee shudderin ore thy wine,—
You hardly know what you are at,
Whenere you think of Us emplyin
The bloody and unhenglish Cat.

"Well may your indigernation rise!
I call it Manley what you feeled
At seein Britons' n-k-d b-cks
By brutial jalors acked and weald.

"Habolish these yere torchiers!
Dont have no horgies any more
Of arf a dozen orficers
All wallerin in a fellers goar.

"Imprisonment alone is not
A thing of whitch we would complane;
Add ill-conwenience to our lot,
But do not give the convick pain.

"And well you know that's not the wust,
Not if you went and biled us whole;
The Lash's degeradation!—that's
What cuts us to the wery soul!"

3. The questions respecting punishment and reformation, which these verses incidentally propose, are precisely the same which had to be determined three thousand years ago in the city of Athens (the only difference of any importance being that the instrument of execution discussed was club instead of cat[1]); and their determination gave rise to the peculiar form in which the history of the great Athenian Squire, Theseus,—our to-day's subject—was presented to mankind.

The story is a difficult one to tell, and a more difficult one still to understand. The likeness, or imagined likeness, of the hero himself, as the Greeks fancied him, you may see, when you care to do so, at the British Museum, in simple guise enough.[2]

[1] [See Plutarch's *Life of Theseus*, §§ 8, 10: "And first in Epidaurus he slew Periphetes, who used a club as his weapon. The club took the fancy of Theseus, and he adopted it as a weapon, and always used it. . . . So did Theseus sally forth and chastise evil-doers, making them undergo the same cruelties which they practised on others, thus justly punishing them for their crimes in their own wicked fashion."]

[2] [Plate X.; the so-called "Theseus," from the East Pediment of the Parthenon. For other references to the marble, see Vol. IV. p. 119 n., and General Index.]

"Theseus"

4. Miss Edgeworth, in her noble last novel, *Helen*,[1] makes *her* hero fly into a passion at even being suspected of wishing to quote the too trite proverb that "No man is a hero to his valet-de-chambre." But Mr. Beauclerk disclaims it for its triteness only, when he ought rather to have disclaimed it for its untruth. Every truly great man that ever I heard of, was a principal hero to his servants, and most heroic to those most intimate with him. At all events, the Greeks meant all the world to be to their hero as valets-de-chambre, for he sits mother-naked. Under which primitive aspect, indeed, I would fain show you, mentally as well as bodily, every hero I give you account of. It is the modern method, in order to give you more inviting pictures of people, to dress them—often very correctly—in the costume of the time, with such old clothes as the masquerade shops keep. But my own steady aim is to strip them for you, that you may see if they are of flesh, indeed, or dust. Similarly, I shall try to strip theories bare, and facts, such as you need to know.

Mother-naked sits Theseus: and around about him, not much more veiled, ride his Athenians, in Pan-Athenaic procession, honouring their Queen-Goddess. Admired, beyond all other marble shapes in the world; for which reason, the gentlemen of my literary club here in London, professing devotion to the same goddess, decorate their very comfortable corner house in Pall Mall with a copy of this Attic sculpture.[2]

Being therein, themselves, Attic in no wise, but essentially barbarous, pilfering what they cannot imitate: for a

[1] [See Vol. XV. p. 227 *n.*, where Ruskin's fondness for this novel is noted. The passage here referred to is as follows: "'I believe,' said Beauclerc, 'in general it is found that few great men of any times stand the test of near acquaintance. No man—' 'Spare me!' cried Lady Davenant, interrupting him, for she imagined she knew what he was going to say: 'oh! spare me that old sentence, "No man is a hero to his valet de chambre."' 'So do I,' replied Beauclerc; but Lady Davenant had turned away, and he now spoke in so low a voice that only Helen heard him. 'So do I detest that quotation, not only for being hackneyed, but for having been these hundred years the comfort both of lean-jawed envy and fat mediocrity'" (vol. i. ch. xii. p. 263, 1834 edition).]

[2] [The frieze on the Athenæum Club-house.]

truly Attic mind would have induced them to pourtray *themselves*, as they appear in their own Pan-Christian procession, whenever and wherever it may be:—presumably, to Epsom Downs on the Derby day.

5. You may see, I said, the statue of Theseus whenever you care to do so. I do not in the least know why you *should* care. But for years back, you, or your foolish friends, have been making a mighty fuss to get yourselves into the British Museum on Sundays:[1] so I suppose you want to see the Theseus, or the stuffed birds, or the crabs and spiders, or the skeleton of the gorilla, or the parched alligator-skins;[2] and you imagine these contemplations likely to improve, and sanctify, that is to say, recreate, your minds.

But are you quite sure you have got any minds yet to be recreated? Before you expect edification from that long gallery full of long-legged inconceivable spiders, and colossal blotchy crabs, did you ever think of looking with any mind, or mindfulness, at the only too easily conceivable short-legged spider of your own English acquaintance? or did you ever so much as consider why the crabs on Margate sands were minded to go sideways instead of straightforward? Have you so much as watched a spider making his cobweb, or, if you have not yet had leisure to do that, in the toil of your own cobweb-making, did you ever *think* how he threw his first thread across the corner?

No need for you to go to the British Museum yet, my friends, either on Sundays or any other day.

6. "Well, but the Greek sculpture? We can't see *that* at home in our room corners."

And what is Greek sculpture, or any sculpture, to you? Are your own legs and arms not handsome enough for you to look at, but you must go and stare at chipped and

[1] [After a prolonged agitation, the Sunday opening of the British Museum and National Gallery was ultimately adopted in 1896.]

[2] [The Natural History collections were not removed to the new Museum at South Kensington till 1880.]

smashed bits of stone in the likenesses of legs and arms that ended their walks and work two thousand years ago?

"Your own legs and arms are not as handsome as—you suppose they ought to be," say you?

No; I fancy not: and you will not make them handsomer by sauntering with your hands in your pockets through the British Museum. I suppose you will have an agitation, next, for leave to smoke in it. Go and walk in the fields on Sunday, making sure, first, therefore, that you have fields to walk in: look at living birds, not at stuffed ones; and make your own breasts and shoulders better worth seeing than the Elgin Marbles.

Which to effect, remember, there are several matters to be thought of. The shoulders will get strong by exercise. So indeed will the breast. But the breast chiefly needs exercise *inside* of it—of the lungs, namely, and of the heart; and this last exercise is very curiously inconsistent with many of the athletic exercises of the present day. And the reason I do want you, for once, to go to the British Museum, and to look at that broad chest of Theseus, is that the Greeks imagined it to have something better than a Lion's Heart beneath its breadth—a hero's heart, duly trained in every pulse.

7. They imagined it so. Your modern extremely wise and liberal historians will tell you it never was so:—that no real Theseus ever existed then; and that none can exist now, or, rather, that everybody is himself a Theseus and a little more.

All the more strange then, all the more instructive, as the disembodied Cincinnatus of the Roman,[1] so this disembodied Theseus of the Ionian; though certainly Mr. Stuart Mill could not consider him, even in that ponderous block of marble imagery, a "utility fixed and embodied in a material object."[2] Not even a disembodied utility—not even a ghost—if he never lived. An idea only; yet one

[1] [See Letter 21, §§ 6, 7 (p. 357).]
[2] [See Letter 4, §§ 5, 6 (p. 64).]

that has ruled all minds of men to this hour, from the hour of its first being born, a dream, into this practical and solid world.

Ruled, and still rules, in a thousand ways, which you know no more than the paths by which the winds have come that blow in your face. But you never pass a day without being brought, somehow, under the power of Theseus.

8. You cannot pass a china-shop, for instance, nor an upholsterer's, without seeing, on some mug or plate, or curtain, or chair, the pattern known as the "Greek fret," simple or complex. I once held it in especial dislike,[1] as the chief means by which bad architects tried to make their buildings look classical; and as ugly in itself. Which it is: and it has an ugly meaning also; but a deep one, which I did not then know; having been obliged to write too young, when I knew only half truths, and was eager to set them forth by what I thought fine words. People used to call me a good writer then; now they say I can't write at all; because, for instance, if I think anybody's house is on fire, I only say, "Sir, your house is on fire;" whereas formerly I used to say, "Sir, the abode in which you probably passed the delightful days of youth is in a state of inflammation," and everybody used to like the effect of the two p's in "probably passed," and of the two d's in "delightful days."[2]

9. Well, that Greek fret, ugly in itself, has yet definite and noble service in decorative work, as black has among colours; much more, has it a significance, very precious, though very solemn, when you can read it.

There is so much in it, indeed, that I don't well know where to begin. Perhaps it will be best to go back to our cathedral door at Lucca, where we have been already.[3] For as, after examining the sculpture on the bell, with the help of the sympathetic ringer, I was going in to look at

[1] [See *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), Vol. VIII. p. 143, where in the note Letter "33" is a misprint for "23."]

[2] [Compare below, p. 603. For other passages in which Ruskin notices his practice of alliteration, see Vol. VI. p. 486 n., and Vol. XXII. pp. 514, 515.]

[3] [See Letter 18, § 4 (p. 307).]

the golden lamp, my eyes fell on a slightly traced piece of sculpture and legend on the southern wall of the porch, which, partly feeling it out with my finger, it being worn away by the friction of many passing shoulders, broad and

*Fig. 6*

narrow, these six hundred years and more, I drew for you, and Mr. Burgess has engraved.

10. The straggling letters at the side, read straight, and with separating of the words, run thus:—

"HIC QVEM CRETICVS EDIT DEDALVS EST LABERINTHVS.
DE QVO NVLLVS VADERE QVIVIT QVI FVIT INTVS
NI THESEVS GRATIS ADRIANE STAMINE JVTVS."

which is in English:—

"This is the labyrinth which the Cretan Dedalus built,
Out of which nobody could get who was inside,
Except Theseus; nor could he have done it, unless he had been helped with a thread by Adriane, all for love."

Upon which you are to note, first, that the grave announcement, "This is the labyrinth which the Cretan Dedalus built,"[1] may possibly be made interesting even to some of your children, if reduced from mediæval sublimity, into your more popular legend—"This is the house that Jack built." The cow with the crumpled horn will then remind them of the creature who, in the midst of this labyrinth, lived as a spider in the centre of his web; and the "maiden 'all forlorn" may stand for Ariadne, or Adriane—(either name is given her by Chaucer, as he chooses to have three syllables or two[2])—while the gradual involution of the ballad, and necessity of clear-mindedness as well as clear utterance on the part of its singer, is a pretty vocal imitation of the deepening labyrinth. Theseus, being a pious hero, and the first Athenian knight who cut his hair short in front,[3] may not inaptly be represented by the priest all shaven and shorn; the cock that crew in the morn is the proper Athenian symbol of a pugnacious mind;[4] and the malt that lay in the house fortunately indicates the connection of Theseus and the Athenian power with the mysteries of Eleusis, where corn first, it is said, grew in Greece.[5] And by the way, I am more and more struck every day, by the singular Grecism in Shakespeare's mind, contrary in many respects to the rest of his nature; yet compelling

[1] [On the subject of labyrinths thus engraved on many Christian churches—symbolical of the Divine grace which alone can extricate men from the mazes of sin and error—see *Les Labyrinthes d'Églises: Labyrinthe de la Cathédrale d'Amiens*, by Edmond Soyez, Amiens, 1896; and compare *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. §§ 12, 13 The people of Lucca are fond, says M. Soyez (p. 11 *n.*), of following with the finger the lines of the labyrinth; this has been done for so many centuries that the group of Theseus and the Minotaur, which was engraved on the centre, is no longer visible.]

[2] [Exclusive, that is, of the first syllable, which is common to both.]

[3] [See Plutarch's *Life of Theseus*, § 4: "As it was at that period still the custom for those who were coming to man's estate to go to Delphi and offer to the god the first-fruits of their hair (which was then cut for the first time), Theseus went to Delphi, and they say that a place there is even to this day named after him. But he only cut the front part of his hair, as Homer tells us the Abantes did, and this fashion of cutting the hair was called Theseus's fashion because of him."]

[4] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 133 (Vol. XX. p. 291).]

[5] ["They say that the Rarian plain (near Eleusis) was the first to be sown and the first to bear crops, and therefore it is their custom to take the sacrificial barley and to make the cakes for the sacrifices out of its produce" (Pausanias, i. 38, 6).]

him to associate English fairyland with the great Duke of Athens,[1] and to use the most familiar of all English words for land, "acre," in the Greek or Eleusinian sense, not the English one!

> "Between the acres of the rye,
> These pretty country-folks do lie—"[2]

and again—"search every acre in the high grown field,"[3] meaning "ridge," or "crest," not "ager," the root of "agriculture." Lastly, in our nursery rhyme, observe that the name of Jack, the builder, stands excellently for Dædalus, retaining the idea of him down to the phrase, "Jack-of-all-Trades." Of this Greek builder you will find some account

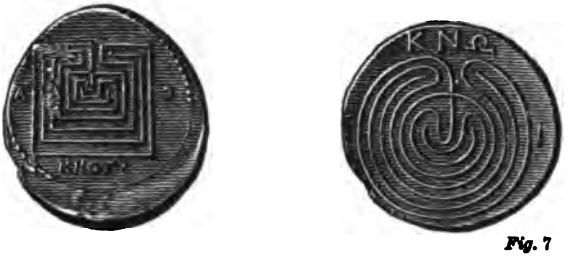

*Fig.* 7

at the end of my *Aratra Pentelici*:[4] to-day I can only tell you he is distinctively the power of finest human, as opposed to Divine, workmanship or craftsmanship. Whatever good there is, and whatever evil, in the labour of the hands, separated from that of the soul, is exemplified by his history and performance.[5] In the deepest sense, he was to the Greeks, Jack of all trades, yet Master of none; the real Master of every trade being always a God. His own special work or craft was inlaying or dovetailing, and especially of black in white.

And this house which he built was his finest piece of

[1] [Hence Ruskin's allusion above (p. 384) to "the Theseus of the Elgin Marbles and *Midsummer Night's Dream*."]
[2] [*As You Like It*, Act v. sc. 3.]
[3] [*King Lear*, Act iv. sc. 4.]
[4] [See *Aratra Pentelici*, §§ 206 *seq.* (Vol. XX. pp. 351 *seq.*).]
[5] [Here in one of his copies Ruskin compares Letter 28, § 5 (p. 510).]

involution, or cunning workmanship; and the memory of it is kept by the Greeks for ever afterwards, in that running border of theirs, involved in and repeating itself, called the Greek fret, of which you will at once recognize the character in these two pictures of the labyrinth of Dædalus

*Fig.* 8

itself, on the coins of the place where it was built, Cnossus, in the island of Crete;[1] and which you see, in Figure 8, surrounding the head of Theseus, himself, on a coin of the same city.

11. Of course frets and returning lines were used in

[1] [Electrotypes of similar coins may be seen among those exhibited at the British Museum: III. B. 39 and VI. B. 29.]

ornamentation when there were no labyrinths—probably long before labyrinths. A symbol is scarcely ever invented just when it is needed. Some already recognized and accepted form or thing becomes symbolic at a particular time. Horses had tails, and the moon quarters, long before there were Turks; but the horse-tail and crescent are not less definitely symbolic to the Ottoman. So, the early forms of ornament are nearly alike, among all nations of any capacity for design: they put meaning into them afterwards, if they ever come themselves to *have* any meaning. Vibrate but the point of a tool against an unbaked vase, as it revolves, set on the wheel,—you have a wavy or zigzag line. The vase revolves once; the ends of the wavy line do not exactly tally when they meet; you get over the blunder by turning one into a head, the other into a tail,—and have a symbol of eternity —if, first, which is wholly needful, you have an *idea* of eternity!

12. Again, the free sweep of a pen at the finish of a large letter has a tendency to throw itself into a spiral. There is no particular intelligence, or spiritual emotion, in the production of this line. A worm draws it with his coil, a fern with its bud, and a periwinkle with his shell. Yet, completed in the Ionic capital, and arrested in the bending point of the acanthus leaf in the Corinthian one, it has become the primal element of beautiful architecture and ornament in all the ages; and is eloquent with endless symbolism, representing the power of the winds and waves in Athenian work, and of the old serpent,[1] which is the Devil, and Satan, in Gothic work: or, indeed, often enough, of both, the Devil being held prince of the power of the air[2]—as in the story of Job,[3] and the lovely story of Buonconte of Montefeltro, in Dante:[4] nay, in this very tale of Theseus, as Chaucer tells it,—having got hold, by ill

[1] [Revelation xii. 9.]
[2] [Ephesians ii. 2.]
[3] [Job i. 19.]
[4] [*Purgatorio*, v. The passage is quoted with comments in *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 314–315).]

luck, only of the later and calumnious notion that Theseus deserted his saviour-mistress, he wishes him Devil-speed instead of God-speed, and that energetically—

"A twenty-divel way the wind him drive."[1]

For which, indeed, Chaucer somewhat deserved (for he ought not to have believed such things of Theseus) the God of Love's anger at his drawing too near the daisy. I will write the pretty lines partly in modern spelling for you, that you may get the sense better:—

"I, kneeling by this flower, in good intent,
Abode, to know what all the people meant,
As still as any stone; till at the last
The God of Love on me his eyen cast
And said, 'Who kneeleth there?' And I answered
Unto his asking,
And said, 'Sir, it am I,' and came him near
And salued him.—Quoth he, 'What dost thou here,
So nigh mine own flower, so boldly?
It were better worthy, truly,
A worm to nighen near my flower than thou.'
'And why, Sir,' quoth I, 'an it like you?'
'For thou,' quoth he, 'art nothing thereto able,
It is my relike, digne, and delitable.
And thou my foe, and all my folk worriest.*
And of mine old servants thou missayest.'"[2]

But it is only for evil speaking of ladies that Chaucer felt his conscience thus pricked,—chiefly of Cressida; whereas, I have written the lines for you because it is the very curse of this age that we speak evil alike of ladies and knights, and all that made them noble in past days;—nay, of saints also; and I have, for first business, next January,[3] to say what I can for our own St. George, against the

* Chaucer's real word means "warrest with all my folk"; but it was so closely connected with "weary" and "worry" in association of sound, in his days, that I take the last as nearest the sense.

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[1] [*The Legende of Goode Women:* "Legenda Adriane de Athenes," line 292.]
[2] [From the Prologue to the *Legende of Goode Women*, 308–320.]
[3] [Not said in January, but in February (Letter 26).]

enlightened modern American view of him, that he was nothing better than a swindling bacon-seller[1] (good enough, indeed, so, for us, *now!*).

13. But to come back to the house that Jack built. You will want to know, next, whether Jack ever *did* build it. I believe, in veritable bricks and mortar—no; in veritable limestone and cave-catacomb, perhaps, yes; it is no matter how; *somehow*, you see, Jack must have built it, for there is the picture of it on the coin of the town. He built it, just as St. George killed the dragon; so that you put a picture of him also on the coin of *your* town.[2]

Not but that the real and artful labyrinth might have been, for all we know.[3] A very real one, indeed, was built by twelve brotherly kings in Egypt, in two stories, one for men to live in, the other for crocodiles;—and the upper story was visible and wonderful to all eyes, in authentic times:[4] whereas, we know of no one who ever saw Jack's labyrinth: and yet, curiously enough, the real labyrinth set the pattern of nothing; while Jack's ghostly labyrinth has set the pattern of almost everything linear and complex, since; and the pretty spectre of it blooms at this hour, in vital hawthorn for you, every spring, at Hampton Court.

14. Now, in the pictures of this imaginary maze, you are to note that both the Cretan and Lucchese designs agree in being composed of a single path or track, coiled, and recoiled, on itself. Take a piece of flexible chain and

[1] [See Letter 26, § 5 (p. 476) for the quotation from Emerson.]

[2] [For Ruskin's criticism of Pistrucci's design on the British sovereign, see Letter 26, § 3 (p. 475); also Vol. XXVI. p. 563.]

[3] [The excavations carried out at Knossos by Mr. Arthur Evans during recent years leave little room for doubt that the "House of Minos" with its mazy corridors and subterranean conduits was the labyrinth of tradition.]

[4] [Herodotus, ii. 147, 148: "The Egyptians set up over them twelve kings, who made agreement . . . to live in perfect friendship. . . . Moreover they resolved to join together and leave a memorial of themselves; and they caused to be made a labyrinth. . . . This I saw myself, and I found it greater than words can say. . . . There are in it two kinds of chambers, one below the ground and the other above. The upper set of chambers we ourselves saw, going through them, and we tell of them having seen with our own eyes; but the chambers underground we heard about only, for the Egyptians who had charge of them were not willing on any account to show them, saying that here were the sepulchres of the kings who had first built this labyrinth and of the sacred crocodiles."]

lay it down, considering the chain itself as the path: and, without an interruption, it will trace any of the three figures. (The two Cretan ones are indeed the same in design, except in being, one square, and the other round.) And recollect, upon this, that the word "Labyrinth" properly means "rope-walk," or "coil-of-rope-walk," its first syllable being probably also the same as our English name "Laura," "the path,"[1] and its method perfectly given by Chaucer in the single line —"And, for the house is crenkled to and fro."[2] And on this, note farther, first, that *had* the walls been real, instead of ghostly, there would have been no difficulty whatever in getting either out or in, for you could go no other way. But if the walls were spectral, and yet the transgression of them made your final entrance or return impossible, Ariadne's clue was needful indeed.

Note, secondly, that the question seems not at all to have been about getting in; but getting *out* again. The clue, at all events, could be helpful only after you had carried it in; and if the spider, or other monster in mid-web, ate you, the help in your clue, for return, would be insignificant. So that this thread of Ariadne's implied that even victory over the monster would be vain, unless you could disentangle yourself from his web also.

15. So much you may gather from coin or carving: next, we try tradition. Theseus, as I said before, is the great settler or law-giver of the Athenian state;[3] but he is so eminently as the Peace-maker, causing men to live in fellowship who before lived separate, and making roads passable that were infested by robbers or wild beasts. He is the exterminator of every bestial and savage element, and the type of human, or humane power, which power you will find in this, and all my other books on policy, summed in

[1] [Ruskin here follows Liddell and Scott, who connect λαβύρινθος with λαύρα (path) and μήρινθος (cord). J. G. Frazer (article "Labyrinth" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) explains that "the word is derived from the λαύραι or passages in a mine. According to other etymologists the Greek word is "of unknown, probably non-Hellenic, origin" (Murray's *New English Dictionary*).]

[2] [*The Legende of Goode Women:* "Legenda Adriane de Athenes," line 127.]

[3] [See Letter 22, § 21 (p. 386).]

the terms, "Gentleness and Justice."[1] The Greeks dwelt chiefly in their thoughts on the last, and Theseus, representing the first, has therefore most difficulty in dealing with questions of punishment, and criminal justice.[2]

16. Now the justice of the Greeks was enforced by three great judges, who lived in three islands.[3] Æacus, who lived in the island of Ægina, is the administrator of distributive, or "dividing" justice; which relates chiefly to property, and his subjects, as being people of industrious temper, were once ants; afterwards called Ant-people, or "Myrmidons."

Secondly, Minos, who lived in the island of Crete, was the judge who punished crime, of whom presently; finally, Rhadamanthus, called always by Homer "golden," or "glowing" Rhadamanthus, was the judge who rewarded virtue;[4] and he lived in a blessed island covered with flowers, but which eye of man hath not yet seen, nor has any living ear heard lisp of wave on that shore.[5]

For the very essence and primal condition of virtue is that it shall not know of, nor believe in, any blessed islands, till it find them, it may be, in due time.[6]

And of these three judges, two were architects, but the third only a gardener. Æacus helped the gods to build the

[1] [Compare *Unto this Last*, Preface, § 6 (Vol. XVII. p. 21); *Time and Tide*, § 60 (*ibid.*, p. 368); and *Fors*, Letter 41, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 80).]

[2] [For Theseus "causing men to live in fellowship who before lived separate," see Plutarch's *Life*, 24; for his making roads passable, see *ibid.*, 8, 10. For Theseus as "representing Gentleness," see his character as sketched by Plutarch, and by Euripides (*e.g.*, in the *Supplices*). Ruskin's next statement, that Theseus "has most difficulty in dealing with questions of punishment and criminal justice," has not the same classical authority. It seems to be rather his interpretation of the story of Theseus, Ariadne, the labyrinth, and the slaying of the Minotaur. This, the hero's most difficult task, was accomplished by "the right interweaving of Anger with Love, in criminal justice" (p. 414). "His conquest of the Minotaur, the chief glory of his life, is possible only to him through love" (p. 428); while, on the other hand, "Theseus, slaying the Minotaur, is obeying the law of justice and enforcing anger" (*Val d'Arno*, § 198, Vol. XXIII. p. 117).]

[3] [Compare "The Tortoise of Ægina," §§ 8–11 (Vol. XX. pp. 382–384). See also Letter 82, § 5 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 225), where Ruskin notes this analysis of the powers of the three judges as original.]

[4] [See the passage from the *Odyssey* given in Vol. XX. p. 383 *n.*]

[5] [For "the blessed island covered with flowers," see the passage from Pindar translated in *Queen of the Air*, Vol. XIX. p. 350. For the Bible phrases used in this sentence, see Isaiah lxiv. 4 and 1 Corinthians ii. 9.]

[6] [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. pp. 398–399.]

walls of Troy. Minos appointed the labyrinth in coils round the Minotaur; but Rhadamanthus only set trees, with golden fruit on them, beside waters of comfort,[1] and overlaid the calm waves with lilies.

17. They *did* these things, I tell you, in very truth, cloud-hidden indeed; but the things themselves are with us to this day. No town on earth is more real than that town of Troy. Her prince, long ago, was dragged dead round the walls that Æacus built; but her princedom did not die with him. Only a few weeks since, I was actually standing, as I told you,[2] with my good friend Mr. Parker, watching the lizards play among the chinks in the walls built by Æacus, for his wandering Trojans, by Tiber side. And, perhaps within memory of man, some of you may have walked up or down Tower Street, little thinking that its tower was also built by Æacus, for his wandering Trojans and their Cæsar, by Thames side: and on Tower Hill itself —where I had my pocket picked only the other day by some of the modern Æacidæ—stands the English Mint, "dividing" gold and silver which Æacus, first of all Greeks, divided in his island of Ægina,[3] and struck into intelligible money-stamp and form, that men might render to Cæsar the things which *are* Cæsar's.[4]

18. But the Minos labyrinth is more real yet; at all events, more real for *us*. And what it was, and is, as you have seen at Lucca, you shall hear at Florence, where you are to learn Dante's opinion upon it, and Sandro Botticelli shall draw it for us.[5]

That Hell, which so many people think the only place Dante gives any account of[6] (yet seldom know his account even of that), was, he tells you, divided into upper, midmost, and nether pits. You usually lose sight of this main

[1] [Psalms xxiii. 2 (Prayer-book version).]
[2] [See Letter 21, § 6 (p. 356).]
[3] [See, again, Vol. XX. p. 381.]
[4] [Compare Mark xii. 17; Luke xx. 25.]
[5] [See the old Florentine engraving (Plate XII.) in Letter 28 (p. 510).]
[6] [Compare Vol. XXII. p. 101 and *n.*; and *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 69. For the divisions of Dante's Hell, see below, p. 426 and note.]

division of it, in the more complex one of the nine circles; but remember, these are divided in diminishing proportion: six of them are the upper hell; two, the midmost; one, the lowest.* You will find this a very pretty and curious proportion. Here it is in labyrinthine form, putting the three dimensions at right angles to each other, and drawing a spiral round them. I show you it in a spiral line, because the idea of descent is in Dante's mind, spiral (as of a worm's or serpent's coil) throughout; even to the mode of Geryon's flight, "*ruota* e discende";[1] and Minos accordingly indicates which circle any sinner is to be sent to, in a most graphically labyrinthine manner, by twisting his tail round himself so many times, necessarily thus marking the level.[2]

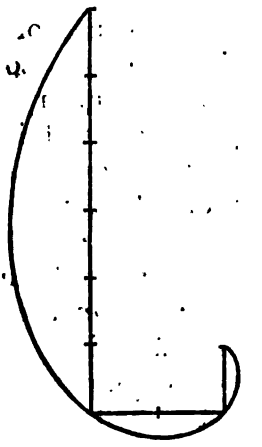

*Fig. 9*

19. The uppermost and least dreadful hell, divided into six circles, is the hell of those who cannot rightly govern themselves, but have no mind to do mischief to any one else. In the lowest circle of this, and within the same walls with the more terrible mid-hell, whose stench even comes up and reaches to them,[3] are people who have not rightly governed their *thoughts:* and these are buried for ever in fiery tombs, and their thoughts thus governed to purpose; which you, my friends, who are so fond of freedom of thought, and freedom of the press, may wisely meditate on.

* The deepening orders of sin, in the nine circles, are briefly these,—1. Unredeemed nature; 2. Lust; 3. Gluttony; 4. Avarice; 5. Discontent; 6. Heresy; 7. Open violence; 8. Fraudful violence; 9. Treachery. But they are curiously dovetailed together,—serpent-tailed, I should say,—by closer coil, not expanding plume. You shall understand the joiner's work next month.[4]

[1] [*Inferno*, xvii. 114: compare *Unto this Last*, § 74 (Vol. XVII. p. 100).]
[2] [*Ibid.*, v. 11: compare Vol. XX. pp. 353, 383.]
[3] [*Inferno*, xi. 10–12.]
[4] [See Letter 24, §§ 12 *seq.* (pp. 424–428).]

20. Then the two lower hells are for those who have wilfully done mischief to other people. And of these, some do open injury, and some, deceitful injury, and of these the rogues are put the lower; but there is a greater distinction in the manner of sin, than its simplicity or roguery:—namely, whether it be done in hot blood or cold blood. The injurious sins, done in hot blood—that is to say, under the influence of passion—are in the midmost hell; but the sins done in cold blood, without passion, or, more accurately, contrary to passion, far down *below* the freezing-point, are put in the lowest hell: the ninth circle.[1]

21. Now, little as you may think it, or as the friend thought it, who tried to cure me of jesting the other day,[2] I should not have taken upon me to write this *Fors*, if I had not, in some degree, been cured of jesting long ago; and in the same way that Dante was,—for in my poor and faltering path I have myself been taken far enough down among the diminished circles to see this nether hell—the hell of Traitors; and to know, what people do not usually know of treachery, that it is not the fraud, but the *cold-heartedness*, which is chiefly dreadful in it. Therefore, this nether Hell is of ice, not fire; and of ice that nothing can break.

> "Oh, ill-starred folk,
> Beyond all others wretched, who abide
> In such a mansion as scarce thought finds words
> To speak of, better had ye here on earth
> Been flocks or mountain goats.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> I saw, before, and underneath my feet,
> A lake, whose frozen surface liker seemed
> To glass than water. Not so thick a veil
> In winter e'er hath Austrian Danube spread
> O'er his still course, nor Tanais, far remote
> Under the chilling sky. Rolled o'er that mass
> Had Taberniche or Pietrapana fallen
> Not even its rim had creaked.
> As peeps the frog,
> Croaking above the wave,—what time in dreams

[1] [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 85 (Vol. XVII. pp. 391, 392).]
[2] [See Letter 21, § 17 (p. 362).]

> The village gleaner oft pursues her toil,—
> Blue-pinched, and shrined in ice, the spirits stood,
> Moving their teeth in shrill note, like the stork."[1]

22. No more wandering of the feet in labyrinth like this, and the eyes, once cruelly tearless, now blind with frozen tears. But the midmost hell, for hot-blooded sinners, has other sort of lakes,—as, for instance, you saw a little while ago, of hot pitch, in which one bathes otherwise than in Serchio[2]—(the Serchio is the river at Lucca, and Pietrapana a Lucchese mountain). But observe,—for here we get to our main work again,—the great boiling lake on the Phlegethon[3] of this upper hell country is *red*, not black; and its source, as well as that of the river which freezes beneath, is in this island of Crete! in the Mount Ida, "joyous once with leaves and streams."[4] You must look to the passage yourselves—*Inferno*, XIV. (line 130 in Cary) —for I have not room for it now. The first sight of it, to Dante, is as "a little brook, whose crimsoned wave Yet lifts my hair with horror."[5] Virgil makes him look at this spring as the notablest thing seen by him in hell, since he entered its gate; but the great lake of it is under a ruinous mountain, like the fallen Alp through which the Adige foams down to Verona;—and on the crest of this ruin lies couched the enemy of Theseus—the Minotaur:—

> "And there,
> At point of the disparted ridge, lay stretched
> The infamy of Crete—at sight of us
> It gnawed itself, *as one with rage distract.*
> To him my guide exclaimed, 'Perchance thou deem'st
> The King of Athens here.'"[6]

Of whom and of his enemy, I have time to tell you no more to-day—except only that this Minotaur is the type

[1] [*Inferno*, xxxii. 12–16, 23–32, 34–35 (Cary's translation).]
[2] [See Letter 18, § 12 (p. 313).]
[3] [Compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 79 (Vol. XVII. p. 202).]
[4] [*Inferno*, xiv. 93 (Cary's).]
[5] [*Ibid.*, xiv. 74–75 (Cary's).]
[6] [*Ibid.*, xii. 11–17 (Cary's).]

or embodiment of the two essentially bestial sins of Anger and Lust;—that both these are in the human nature, interwoven inextricably with its chief virtue, Love, so that Dante makes this very ruin of the Rocks of hell, on which the Minotaur is couched, to be wrought on them at the instant when "the Universe was thrilled with love,"[1] —(the last moment of the Crucifixion)—and that the labyrinth of these passions is one not fabulous, nor only pictured on coins of Crete. And the right interweaving of Anger with Love, in criminal justice, is the main question in earthly law, which the Athenian lawgiver had to deal with.[2] Look, if you can, at my introductory Lectures at Oxford, § 89;[3] and so I must leave Theseus for this time;—in next letter, which will be chiefly on Christmas cheer, I must really try to get as far as his vegetable soup.[4]

28. As for Æacus, and his coining business, we must even let them alone now, till next year;[5] only I have to thank some readers who have written to me on the subject of interest of money (one or two complaining that I had dismissed it too summarily, when, alas! I am only at the threshold of it!), and, especially, my reader for the press, who has referred me to a delightful Italian book, *Teoremi di Politica Cristiana* (Naples, 1880), and copied out ever so much of it for me; and Mr. Sillar, for farther most useful letters, of which to-day I can only quote this postscript:—

"Please note that your next number of *Fors Clavigera* ought to be in the hands of your readers on Friday, the 1st, or Saturday, the 2nd, of November. The following day being Sunday, the 3rd, there will be read in every church in England, or in the world, where the Church Service is used, the 15th Psalm, which distinctly declares the man who shall ascend to God's holy hill to be him who, amongst other things, has not put forth

[1] [*Inferno*, xii. 40 (Cary's).]
[2] [See above, p. 408.]
[3] [Vol. XX. pp. 88, 89.]
[4] [See p. 429 and note.]
[5] [The subject of Æacus was, however, not resumed. Ruskin's proposals for a St. George's coinage were given in Letter 58 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 429 *seq.*).]

his money upon usury; a verse impiously ignored in most of the metrical versions of the Psalms; those adapted to popular tunes or popular prejudices."

24. I think, accordingly, that some of my readers may be glad to have a sounder version of that Psalm; and as the 14th is much connected with it, and will be variously useful to us afterwards,[1] here they both are, done into verse by an English squire,[2]—or his sister, for they alike could rhyme; and the last finished singing what her brother left unsung, the Third Fors having early put seal on his lips.

PSALM XIV.—(*Dixit insipiens*)

THE foolish man by flesh and fancy ledd,
His guilty hart with this fond thought hath fed:
There is noe God that raigneth.

And so thereafter he and all his mates
Do workes, which earth corrupt, and Heaven hates:
Not one that good remaineth.

Even God himself sent down his piercing ey,
If of this clayy race he could espy
One, that his wisdome learneth.

And loe, he findes that all a strayeng went:
All plung'd in stincking filth, not one well bent,
Not one that God discerneth.

O maddnes of these folkes, thus loosly ledd!
These caniballs, who, as if they were bread,
Gods people do devower:

Nor ever call on God; but they shall quake
More than they now do bragg, when he shall take
The just into his power.

Indeede the poore, opprest by you, you mock:
Their councells are your common jesting stock:
But God is their recomfort.

Ah, when from Syon shall the Saver come,
That Jacob, freed by thee, may glad become
And Israel full of comfort?

[1] [See, for instance, Letter 80, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 179).]
[2] [Sir Philip Sidney: see Letter 35, § 1 (p. 648). And for Ruskin's notes on the Psalm, see *Rock Honeycomb*.]

PSALM XV.—(*Domine, quis habitabit*)

IN tabernacle thine, O Lord, who shall remaine?
Lord, of thy holy hill, who shall the rest obtaine?
Ev'n he that leades a life of uncorrupted traine
Whose deedes of righteous hart, whose harty wordes be plain:
Who with deceitfull tongue hath never us'd to faine;
Nor neighboure hurtes by deede, nor doth with slander stain:
Whose eyes a person vile doth hold in vile disdaine,
But doth, with honour greate, the godly entertaine:
Who othe and promise given doth faithfully maintain,
Although some worldly losse thereby he may sustain;
From bityng usury who ever doth refraine:
Who sells not guiltlesse cause for filthy love of gain,
Who thus proceedes for ay, in sacred mount shall raign.

You may not like this old English at first; but if you can find anybody to read it to you who has an ear, its cadence is massy and grand, more than that of most verse I know, and never a word is lost. Whether you like it or not, the sense of it is true, and the way to the sacred mount (of which mounts, whether of Pity, or of Roses, are but shadows[1]) told you for once, straightforwardly,—on which road I wish you God-speed.

Ever faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

[1] [Mount of Pity, see Letter 22, § 22 (p. 388); Mont Rose, see pp. 296, 354, 365 *n.*]

"WE HAVE SEEN HIS STAR IN THE EAST"

Painted by Bernardo di Luino

## LETTER 24

### CRADLE SONG[1]

CORPUS CHRISTI COLL.,
*November 7th*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—I shall not call you so any more, after this Christmas; first, because things have chanced to me, of late, which have made me too sulky to be friends with anybody; secondly, because in the two years during which I have been writing these letters, not one of you has sent me a friendly word of answer; lastly, because, even if you *were* my friends, it would be waste print to call you so, once a month. Nor shall I sign myself "faithfully yours" any more; being very far from faithfully my own, and having found most other people anything but faithfully mine. Nor shall I sign my name, for I never like the look of it;[2] being, I apprehend, only short for "Rough Skin," in the sense of "Pigskin" (and indeed, the planet under which I was born, Saturn, has supreme power over pigs),—nor can I find historical mention of any other form of the name, except one I made no reference to when it occurred, as that of the leading devil of four,—Red-skin, Blue-skin—and I forget the skins of the other two—who performed in a religious play, of the fourteenth century, which was nearly as comic as the religious earnest of our own century. So that the letters will begin henceforward without address; and close without signature. You will probably know whom they come from, and I don't in the least care whom they go to.

2. I was in London, all day yesterday, where the weather was as dismal as is its wont; and, returning here by the evening train, saw, with astonishment, the stars extricate

[1] [For the title, see below, § 21.]
[2] [Compare Letter 30 (below, p. 557). For the name "Ruskin," see further, in this edition, the volume containing *Præterita*.]

themselves from the fog, and the moon glow for a little while in her setting, over the southern Berkshire hills, as I breathed on the platform at the Reading station (for there were six people in the carriage, and they had shut both the windows).

When I got to Oxford, the sky was entirely clear; the Great Bear was near the ground under the pole, and the Charioteer high overhead, the principal star of him as bright as a gas-lamp.

8. It is a curious default in the stars, to my mind, that there is a Charioteer among them without a chariot; and a Waggon with no waggoner; nor any waggon, for that matter, except the Bear's stomach; but I have always wanted to know the history of the absent Charles, who must have stopped, I suppose to drink, while his cart went on, and so never got to be stellified himself. I wish I knew; but I can tell you less about him than even about Theseus. The Charioteer's story is pretty, however:—he gave his life for a kiss, and did not get it; got made into stars instead.[1] It would be a dainty tale to tell you under

[1] [The story is that of Myrtilus, son of Hermes and charioteer of Œnomaus, whose horses became under his skilful management the swiftest in all Greece. To Œnomaus an oracle had revealed that the husband of the beautiful Hippodamia, his daughter, would cause his death; wherefore, as if to set an impossible task, he declared that she should be married to the man who should defeat the chariot of her father. Hippodamia (or according to some versions, her favoured suitor, Pelops), persuaded Myrtilus to be unfaithful, in the chariot race, to his master; the embraces of Hippodamia were to be his reward. It was denied to him, and he was cast into the sea; but his father, Hermes, raised him to the heavens, as the constellation Charioteer (Auriga). See *Epitoma Vaticana ex Apollodori Bibliotheca*, ed. R. Wagner, pp. 59 *seq.* Ruskin refers to the story again in a letter to C. E. Norton (August 18, 1874: see a later volume of this edition); and in the first draft of *The Queen of the Air* it is given as an illustration of the literal and symbolic powers of Greek myths:—

> "Thus when you are told that the charioteer of Œnomaus was turned into the constellation Auriga, you are, on the one hand, meant to believe it literally;—just as Dante means you to believe literally that the souls of Trajan and Hezekiah formed part of the constellation of the Eagle, and Milton means you to believe that Uriel the archangel inhabits and governs the sun;—while, nevertheless, underlying each of these phantoms in the mind of the relater, there is an abstract significance of a moral principle; and the material light of the transformed mortal, or the enduring angelic spirit, are also symbols of the victories of fidelity and justice, and the all-seeing witness of the supremacy of truth."

Ruskin, it would thus seem, somewhat moralised the tale of Myrtilus. For the references to Dante and Milton, see *Paradiso*, xx. 44 *seq.*, and *Paradise Lost*, ix. 60.]

the mistletoe: perhaps I may have time next year: to-day it is of the stars of Ariadne's crown I want to speak.

4. But that giving one's life for a kiss, and not getting it, is indeed a general abstract of the Greek notion of heroism, and its reward;[1] and, by the way, does it not seem to you a grave defect in the stars, at Christmas time, that all their stories are Greek—not one Christian? In all the east, and all the west, there is not a space of heaven with a Christian story in it; the star of the Wise Men having risen but once, and set, it seems, for ever: and the stars of Foolish men—innumerable, but unintelligible, forming, I suppose, all across the sky that broad way of Asses' milk; while a few Greek heroes and hunters, a monster or two, and some crustaceous animals, occupy, here in the north, our heaven's compass, down to the very margin of the illuminated book.[2] A sky quite good enough for us, nevertheless, for all the use we make of it, either by night or day—or any hope we have of getting into it—or any inclination we have, while still out of it, to "take stars for money."[3]

5. Yet, with all deference to George Herbert, I will take them for nothing of the sort. Money is an entirely pleasant and proper thing to have, itself; and the first shilling I ever got in my life, I put in a pill-box, and put it under my pillow, and couldn't sleep all night for satisfaction. I couldn't have done that with a star; though truly the pretty system of usury makes the stars drop down something else than dew. I got a note from an arithmetical friend the other day, speaking of the death of "an old lady, a cousin of mine—who left—*left*, because she could not take it with her—£200,000. On calculation, I found this old lady, who

[1] [On Greek heroism, compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 276).]

[2] [In so speaking of the sky, Ruskin was thinking of the passage in *Sartor Resartus* (referred to also in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 141 n.), where Carlyle, describing a sunset, says, "Those hues of gold and azure, that hush of expectation as Day died, were still a Hebrew speech for me; nevertheless I was looking at the fair illuminated Letters, and had an eye for their gilding."]

[3] [George Herbert, *The Temple* ("Church Porch," stanza 29); quoted also above, p. 217.]

has been lying bedridden for a year, was accumulating money (*i.e.*, the results of other people's labour) at the rate of 4d. a minute; in other words, she awoke in the morning ten pounds richer than she went to bed." At which, doubtless, and the like miracles throughout the world, "the stars with deep amaze, stand fixed with steadfast gaze;"[1] for this is, indeed, a Nativity of an adverse god to the one you profess to honour, with them, and the angels, at Christmas, by over-eating yourselves.

6. I suppose that is the quite essential part of the religion of Christmas; and, indeed, it is about the most religious thing you do in the year; and if pious people would understand, generally, that, if there be indeed any other God than Mammon, He likes to see people comfortable, and nicely dressed, as much as Mammon likes to see them fasting and in rags, they might set a wiser example to everybody than they do. I am frightened out of my wits, every now and then, here at Oxford, by seeing something come out of poor people's houses, all dressed in black down to the ground; which (having been much thinking of wicked things lately) I at first take for the Devil, and then find, to my extreme relief and gratification, that it's a Sister of Charity. Indeed, the only serious disadvantage of eating, and fine dressing,[2] considered as religious ceremonies, whether at Christmas, or on Sunday, in the Sunday dinner and Sunday gown,—is that you don't always clearly understand what the eating and dressing signify. For example: why should Sunday be kept otherwise than Christmas, and be less merry? Because it is a day of rest, commemorating the fulfilment of God's easy work, while Christmas is a day of toil, commemorating the beginning of His difficult work? Is that the reason? Or because Christmas commemorates His stooping to thirty years of sorrow, and Sunday His rising to countless years of joy? Which

[1] [Milton's Ode *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity.*]

[2] [See Ruskin's reference to this letter (in a note of 1872) in *Time and Tide*, § 62 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 369).]

should be the gladdest day of the two, think you, on either ground? Why haven't you Sunday pantomimes?

7. It is a strait and sore question with me, for when I was a child, I lost the pleasure of some three-sevenths of my life because of Sunday; for I always had a way of looking forward to things, and a lurid shade was cast over the whole of Friday and Saturday by the horrible sense that Sunday was coming, and inevitable.[1] Not that I was rebellious against my good mother or aunts in any wise; feeling only that we were all crushed under a relentless fate; which was indeed the fact, for neither they nor I had the least idea what Holiness meant, beyond what I find stated very clearly by Mr. David—the pious author of "The Paradezeal system of Botany, an arrangement representing the whole globe as a vast blooming and fruitful Paradise,"—that "Holiness is a knowledge of the Ho's."[2]

My mother, indeed, never went so far as my aunt; nor carried her religion down to the ninth or glacial circle[3] of Holiness, by giving me cold dinner; and to this day, I am apt to over-eat myself with Yorkshire pudding, in remembrance of the consolation it used to afford me at one o'clock. Good Friday, also, was partly "intermedled," as Chaucer would call it,[4] with light and shade, because there were hot-cross-buns at breakfast, though we had to go to church afterwards. And, indeed, I observe, happening to have under my hand the account in the *Daily Telegraph* of Good Friday at the Crystal Palace, in 1870, that its observance is for your sakes also now "intermedled" similarly,

[1] [Compare Letter 52, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 297).]

[2] [J. C. David, herbalist and astrologer. His *Paradezeal System of Botany* appeared in 1846. The present quotation is from another publication, entitled *J. C. David's Geographical Botany and Astronomy*, p. 36: "Ho is a fire of the Heavens. Holiness is knowledge of the Ho's; no man can be a holy-man who is ignorant of the power that constitutes Holiness, for it is said, He telleth the number of the stars."]

[3] [See Letter 23, § 20 (p. 412).]

[4] ["With skrippes bret-ful of lesenges
Entremedled with tydynges."
—*House of Fame*, iii. 1034.]

with light and shade, by conscientious persons: for in that year, "whereas in former years the performances had been exclusively of a religious character, the directors had supplemented their programme with secular amusements." It was, I suppose, considered "secular" that the fountains should play (though I have noticed that natural ones persist in that profane practice on Sunday also), and accordingly, "there was a very abundant water-supply, while a brilliant sun gave many lovely prismatic effects to the fleeting and changeful spray" (not careful, even the sun, for his part, to remember how once he became "black as sackcloth of hair"[1]). "A striking feature presented itself to view in the shape of the large and handsome pavilion of Howe and Cushing's American circus. This vast pavilion occupies the whole centre of the grand terrace, and was gaily decorated with bunting and fringed with the show-carriages of the circus, which were bright with gilding, mirrors, portraits, and scarlet panels. The out-door amusements began"—(the English public always retaining a distinct impression that this festival was instituted in the East)—"with an Oriental procession"—(by the way, why don't we always call Wapping the Oriental end of London?)—"of fifteen camels from the circus, mounted by negroes wearing richly coloured and bespangled Eastern costume. The performances then commenced, and continued throughout the day, the attractions comprising the trained wolves, the wonderful monkeys, and the usual scenes in the circle."

8. "There was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour."[2] I often wonder, myself, how long it will be (in the crucifixion afresh, which all the earth has now resolved upon,[3] crying with more unanimous shout than ever

[1] [Revelation vi. 12.]
[2] [Luke xxiii. 44.]
[3] [Ruskin in his copy marks this passage as "wanting a note," but he does not supply it. He seems, however, to mean that the modern world, in pursuit of gain, is ever committing the sin of the crucifixion, being ready at any moment "for thirty pence to sell its God And trample Christ for Hell's approving nod." Compare below, p. 436, where he suggests that perhaps it is Herod rather than Barabbas with whom the modern world is friendly.]

the Jews, "Not this man, but Barabbas"[1])—before the Ninth Hour comes.

9. Assuming, however, that, for the nonce, trained wolves and wonderful monkeys are proper entertainments on Good Friday, pantomimes on Boxing Day, and sermons on Sunday, have you ever considered what observance might be due to Saturday,—the day on which He "preached to the spirits in prison"?[2] for that seems to me quite the part of the three days' work which most of us might first hope for a share in. I don't know whether any of you perceive that your spirits are in prison. I know mine is, and that I would fain have it preached to, and delivered, if it be possible. For, however far and steep the slope may have been into the hell which you say every Sunday that you believe He descended into, there are places trenched deep enough now in all our hearts for the hot lake of Phlegethon[3] to leak and ooze into: and the rock of their shore is no less hard than in Dante's time.

10. And as your winter rejoicings, if they mean anything at all, mean that you have now, at least, a chance of deliverance from that prison, I will ask you to take the pains to understand what the bars and doors of it are, as the wisest man who has yet spoken of them tells you.

There is first, observe, this great distinction in his mind between the penalties of Hell, and the joy of Paradise. The penalty is assigned to definite act of hand; the joy, to definite state of mind. It is questioned of no one, either in the Purgatory or the Paradise, what he has done; but only what evil feeling is still in his heart, or what good, when purified wholly, his nature is noble enough to receive.

11. On the contrary, Hell is constituted such by the one great negative state of being without Love or Fear of God;—there are no degrees of that State; but there are more or less dreadful sins which can be done in it,

[1] [John xviii. 40.]
[2] [1 Peter iii. 19.]
[3] [*Inferno*, xiv.: see above, p. 413.]

according to the degradation of the unredeemed Human nature. And men are judged according to their works.[1]

To give a single instance. The punishment of the fourth circle in Hell is for the Misuse of Money, for having either sinfully kept it, or sinfully spent it. But the pain in Purgatory is only for having sinfully *Loved* it: and the hymn of repentance is, "My *soul* cleaveth unto the dust; quicken thou me."[2]

12. Farther, and this is very notable. You might at first think that Dante's divisions were narrow and artificial, in assigning each circle to one sin only, as if every man did not variously commit many. But it is always one sin, the favourite, which destroys souls. That conquered, all others fall with it: that victorious, all others follow with it. Nevertheless, as I told you,[3] the joiner's work, and interwoven walls of Dante's Inferno, marking double forms of sin, and their overlapping, as it were, when they meet, is[4] one of the subtlest conditions traceable in his whole design.

13. Look back to the scheme I gave you in last number.[5] The Minotaur, spirit of lust and anger, rules over the central hell. But the *sins* of lust and anger, definitely and limitedly described as such, are punished in the upper hell, in the second and fifth circles. Why is this, think you?

Have you ever noticed—enough to call it noticing seriously—the expression, "fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of *the mind*"?[6] There is one lust and one anger of the flesh only; these, all men must feel; rightly feel, if in temperance; wrongly, if in excess; but even then, not necessarily to the destruction of their souls. But there is another lust, and another anger, of the heart; and *these* are the Furies of Phlegethon[7]—wholly ruinous. Lord of

[1] [Revelation xx. 13.]
[2] [See *Inferno*, vii., and *Purgatorio*, xix. 73, where those who are being purged of the sin use the words of Psalm cxix. 25.]
[3] [Letter 23, § 18 *n.* (p. 411).]
[4] [In his own copy Ruskin here notes, "Bad grammar; read 'the joinery, dovetailing, or overlapping of the work is . . .'"]
[5] [See Letter 23, §§ 18–22 (pp. 411–413).]
[6] [Ephesians ii. 3.]
[7] [*Inferno*, xiv.: see above, Letter 23, § 22 (p. 413).]

these, on the shattered rocks, lies couched the Infamy of Crete.[1] For when the heart, as well as the flesh, desires what it should not, and the heart, as well as the flesh, consents and kindles to its wrath, the whole man is corrupted, and his heart's blood is fed in its veins from the lake of fire.

14. Take for special example, this sin of usury with which we have ourselves to deal. The punishment in the fourth circle of the upper hell is on Avarice, not Usury. For a man may be utterly avaricious,—greedy of gold—in an instinctive, fleshly way, yet not corrupt his intellect. Many of the most good-natured men are misers: my first shilling in the pill-box and sleepless night[2] did not at all mean that I was an ill-natured or illiberal boy; it *did* mean, what is true of me still, that I should have great delight in counting money, and laying it in visible heaps and rouleaux. I never part with a new sovereign without a sigh: and if it were not that I am afraid of thieves, I would positively and seriously, at this moment, turn all I have into gold of the newest, and dig a hole for it in my garden, and go and look at it every morning and evening, like the man in *Æsop's Fables*, or Silas Marner:[3] and where I think thieves will not break through nor steal I am always laying up for myself treasures upon earth,[4] with the most eager appetite: that bit of gold and diamonds, for instance (4, § 5), and the most gilded mass-books, and such like, I can get hold of; the acquisition of a Koran, with two hundred leaves richly gilt on both sides, only three weeks since, afforded me real consolation under variously trying circumstances.

Truly, my soul cleaves to the dust of such things. But I have not so perverted my soul, nor palsied my brains, as to expect to be advantaged by that adhesion. I don't expect, because I have gathered much, to find Nature or

[1] [*Ibid.*, xii. 12 (describing the entrance to the seventh circle):—

"At point of the disparted ridge lay stretch'd
The infamy of Crete, detested brood
Of the feign'd heifer" (Cary).]

[2] [See above, § 5.]

[3] [See Æsop's Fable of "The Miser," and *Silas Marner*, ch. ii.]

[4] [Matthew vi. 19, 20.]

and sent out rays round them as from behind a mountain peak, vast and grey against the morning sky. I may be able to get some picture of it, for the January *Fors*, perhaps;[1] and perchance the sun may some day rise for us from behind our Towers of Treachery.

16. Note but this farther, and then we will try to get out of Hell for to-day. The divisions of the central fire are under three creatures, all of them partly man, partly animal. The Minotaur has a man's body, a bull's head (which is precisely the general type of the English nation to-day). The Centaur Chiron has a horse's body; a man's head and breast. The Spirit of Fraud, Geryon, has a serpent's body, his face is that of a just man, and his breast chequered like a lizard's, with labyrinthine lines.[2]

All these three creatures signify the mingling of a brutal instinct with the human mind; but, in the Minotaur, the brute rules, the humanity is subordinate; in the Centaur, the man rules, and the brute is subordinate; in the third, the man and the animal are in harmony; and both false.[3]

Of the Centaurs, Chiron and Nessus, one, the type of human gentleness, justice, and wisdom, stooping to join itself with the nature of animals, and to be healed by the herbs of the ground,[4]—the other, the destruction of Hercules,—you shall be told in the *Fors* of January:[5] to-day I must swiftly sum the story of Theseus.

17. His conquest of the Minotaur, the chief glory of his life, is possible only to him through love, and love's hope and help. But he has no joy either of love or victory.

[1] [This, however, was not done. For another reference to the Tower of Garisenda, see Vol. XV. p. 356.]

[2] [The Minotaur presides over the Seventh Circle (see above, p. 426 *n.*); Chiron is placed, along with Nessus and Pholus, as guardian of the violent in the First Round of the Circle (*Inferno*, xii. 61 *seq.*); Geryon is guardian of the Eighth Circle (*Inferno*, xvii. 1–27).]

[3] [For other references, in this sense, to the Minotaur, see above, p. 387; to the Centaurs, "The Riders of Tarentum" (Vol. XX. pp. 390 *seq.*); to Geryon, above, p. 411 *n.*]

[4] [See, again, Vol. XX. p. 390.]

[5] [Not told: see Letter 25, § 23 (p. 468). The story of Nessus, and the fatal shirt, dyed in his blood and given to Dejanira, is referred to in Letter 58, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 429), and Vol. XIV. p. 228.]

Before he has once held Ariadne in his arms, Diana kills her in the isle of Naxos. Jupiter crowns her in heaven, where there is no following her. Theseus returns to Athens alone.

The ship which hitherto had carried the Minotaur's victims only, bore always a black sail. Theseus had received from his father a purple one, to hoist instead, if he returned victorious.

The common and senseless story[1] is that he forgot to hoist it. Forgot! A sail is so inconspicuous a part of a ship! and one is so likely to forget one's victory, returning, with home seen on the horizon! But he returned *not* victorious, at least for himself;—Diana and Death had been too strong for him. He bore the black sail. And his father, when he saw it, threw himself from the rock of Athens, and died.

Of which the meaning is, that we must not mourn for *ourselves*, lest a worse thing happen to us,[2]—a Greek lesson much to be remembered by Christians about to send expensive orders to the undertaker: unless, indeed, they mean by their black vestments to tell the world that they think their friends are in hell.[3] If in Heaven, with Ariadne and the gods, are we to mourn? And if they were fit for Heaven, are we, for ourselves, ever to leave off mourning? Yet Theseus, touching the beach, is too just and wise to mourn *there*. He sends a herald to the city to tell his father he is safe; stays on the shore to sacrifice to the gods, and feast his sailors. He sacrifices; and makes pottage for them there on the sand.[4] The herald returns to tell him his father is dead also. Such welcome has he for his good work, in the islands, and on the main.

[1] [As told by Plutarch.]

[2] [See John v. 14.]

[3] [For Ruskin's views on "mourning," see Vol. XVI. p. 62, and Vol. XVIII. p. 395.]

[4] ["The boiling of all sorts of pulse at that time is said to take its rise from their mixing the remains of their provisions, when they found themselves safe ashore, boiling them in one pot, and feasting upon them all together" (Plutarch's *Life of Theseus*). This is the story of "Theseus' vegetable soup," so often referred to (Letters 2, 6, 21, 23, 27; pp. 29, 102, 357, 414, 502).]

18. In which work he persists, no less, and is redeemed from darkness by Hercules, and at last helps Hercules himself in his sorest need—as you shall hear afterwards. I must stop to-day at the vegetable soup,—which you would think, I suppose, poor Christmas cheer. Plum-pudding is an Egyptian dish;[2] but have you ever thought how many stories were connected with this Athenian one, pottage of lentils? A bargain of some importance, even to us (especially as usurers[3]); and the healing miracle of Elisha;[4] and the vision of Habakkuk as he was bearing their pottage to the reapers, and had to take it far away to one who needed it more;[5] and, chiefly of all, the soup of the bitter herbs, with its dipped bread and faithful company,—"he it is to whom I shall give the sop when I have dipped it."[6] The meaning of which things, roughly, is, first, that we are not to sell our birthrights for pottage, though we fast to death; but are diligently to know and keep them: secondly, that we are to poison no man's pottage, mental or real: lastly, that we look to it lest we betray the hand which gives us our daily bread.

19. Lessons to be pondered on at Christmas time over our pudding; and the more, because the sops we are dipping for each other, and even for our own children, are not always the most nourishing, nor are the rooms in which we make ready their last supper always carefully furnished.[7]

[1] [Theseus, it is said, aided Peirithous and the Lapithæ against the Centaurs, and afterwards assisted him in an attempt to carry off Persephone from the lower world. Peirithous perished in the enterprise, and Theseus was kept in durance until he was delivered by Hercules. The tale of the help rendered by Theseus to Hercules has been already promised (Letter 2, p. 29), but Ruskin does not tell it. The reference is to the close of the *Hercules Furens* of Euripides, where (1394 *seq.*) Hercules, after having in madness killed his children, is persuaded by Theseus not to kill himself but to come with him to Athens.]

[2] [For descriptions of the puddings and pasties of the Egyptians, drawn from the monuments, see J. G. Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. ii. p. 33 (1878 edition).]

[3] [That is, the bargain between Esau and Jacob: Genesis xxv. 29–34.]

[4] [2 Kings iv. 38–41.]

[5] [In the Apocrypha, The History of the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon, 33, 34.]

[6] [John xiii. 26.]

[7] [See Mark xiv. 15.]

Take, for instance, this example of last supper—(no, I see it is breakfast)—in Chicksand Street, Mile End:—

"On Wednesday an inquest was held on the body of Annie Redfern, aged twenty-eight, who was found dead in a cellar at 5, Chicksand Street, Mile End, on the morning of last Sunday. This unfortunate woman was a fruit-seller, and rented the cellar in which she died at 1s. 9d. per week—her only companion being a little boy, aged three years, of whom she was the mother. It appeared from the evidence of the surgeon who was summoned to see the deceased when her body was discovered on Sunday morning that she had been dead some hours before his arrival. Her knees were drawn up and her arms folded in such a position as to show that she died with her child clasped in her arms. The room was very dark, without any ventilation, and was totally unfit for human habitation. The cause of death was effusion of serum into the pericardium, brought on greatly by living in such a wretched dwelling. The coroner said that as there were so many of these wretched dwellings about, he hoped the jurymen who were connected with the vestry would take care to represent the case to the proper authorities, and see that the place was not let as a dwelling again. This remark from the coroner incited a juryman to reply, 'Oh, if we were to do that, we might empty half the houses in London; there are thousands more like that, and worse.' Some of the jurors objected to the room being condemned; the majority, however, refused to sign the papers unless this was done, and a verdict was returned in accordance with the evidence. It transpired that the body had to be removed to save it from the rats. If the little child who lay clasped in his dead mother's arms has not been devoured by these animals, he is probably now in the workhouse, and will remain a burden on the ratepayers, who unfortunately have no means of making the landlord of the foul den that destroyed his mother answerable for his support."[1]

20. I miss, out of the column of the *Pall Mall* for the 1st of this month, one paragraph after this, and proceed to the next but one, which relates to the enlightened notion among English young women, derived from Mr. J. Stuart Mill,—that the "career" of the Madonna is too limited a one,[2] and that modern political economy can provide them, as the *Pall Mall* observes, with "much more lucrative occupations than that of nursing the baby." But you must know, first, that the Athenians always kept memory of Theseus' pot of vegetable soup, and of his sacrifice, by procession in spring-time, bearing a rod wreathed

[1] [For another reference to this case, see Letter 73, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 15).]
[2] [Compare Letter 12, § 14 (p. 208).]

with lambs'-wool, and singing an Easter carol, in these words:—

"Fair staff, may the gods grant, by thee, the bringing of figs to us, and buttery cakes, and honey in bulging cups, and the sopping of oil, and wine in flat cups, easy to lift, that thou mayest" (meaning that *we* may, but not clear which is which) "get drunk and sleep."[1]

Which Mr. Stuart Mill and modern political economy have changed into a pretty Christmas carol for English children, lambs for whom the fair staff also brings wine of a certain sort, in flat cups, "that they may get drunk, and sleep." Here is the next paragraph from the *Pall Mall*:—

"One of the most fertile causes of excessive infant mortality is the extensive practice in manufacturing districts of insidiously narcotising young children, that they may be the more conveniently laid aside when more lucrative occupations present themselves than that of nursing the baby. Hundreds of gallons of opium in various forms are sold weekly in many districts for this purpose. Nor is it likely that the practice will be checked until juries can be induced to take a rather severe view of the suddenly fatal misadventures which this sort of chronic poisoning not unfrequently produces. It appears, however, to be very difficult to persuade them to look upon it as other than a venial offence. An inquest was recently held at Chapel Gate upon the body of an infant who had died from the administration, by its mother, of about twelve times the proper dose of laudanum. The bottle was labelled carefully with a caution that 'opium should not be given to children under seven years of age.' In this case five drops of laudanum were given to a baby of eighteen months. The medical evidence was of a quite unmistakable character, and the coroner in summing up read to the jury a definition of manslaughter, and told them that 'a lawful act, if dangerous, not attended with such care as would render the probability of danger very small, and resulting in death, would amount to manslaughter at the least. Then in this case they must return a verdict of manslaughter unless they could find any circumstance which would take it out of the rule of law he had laid down to them. It was not in evidence that the mother had used any caution at all in administering the poison.' Nevertheless, the jury returned, after a short interval, the verdict of homicide by misadventure."

21. "Hush-a-bye, baby, upon the tree top," my mother used to sing to me: and I remember the dawn of intelligence in which I began to object to the bad rhyme which followed:—"when the wind blows, the cradle will rock."

[1] [Plutarch, *Life of Theseus*, 22.]

But the Christmas winds must blow rudely, and warp the waters[1] askance indeed, which rock our English cradles now.

Mendelssohn's songs without words have been, I believe, lately popular in musical circles. We shall, perhaps, require cradle songs with very few words, and Christmas carols with very sad ones, before long; in fact, it seems to me, we are fast losing our old skill in carolling. There is a different tone in Chaucer's notion of it (though this carol of his[2] is in spring-time indeed, not at Christmas):—

"Then went I forth on my right hand,
Down by a little path I found,
Of Mintës full, and Fennel greene.
. . . . . .
Sir Mirth I found, and right anon
Unto Sir Mirth gan I gone,
There, where he was, him to solace:
And with him, in that happy place,
So fair folke and so fresh, had he,
That when I saw, I wondered me
From whence such folke might come,
So fair were they, all and some;
For they were like, as in my sight
To angels, that be feathered bright.
These folke, of which I tell you so,
Upon a karole wenten tho,*
A Ladie karoled them, that hight†
Gladnesse, blissful and light.
She could make in song such refraining
It sate her wonder well to sing,
Her voice full clear was, and full sweet,
She was not rude, nor unmeet,
But couth‡ enough for such doing,
As longeth unto karolling;
For she was wont, in every place,
To singen first, men to solace.
For singing most she gave her to,
No craft had she so lefe§ to do."

* Went *then* in measure of a carol dance.
† Was called.
‡ Skilful.
§ Fond.

[1] [*As You Like It*, Act ii. sc. 7 (song).]
[2] [*The Romaunt of the Rose*, 719–721, 723–748.]

Mr. Stuart Mill would have set her to another craft, I fancy (not but that singing is a lucrative one, nowadays, if it be shrill enough); but you will not get your wives to sing thus for nothing, if you send them out to earn their dinners (instead of earning them yourselves for them), and put their babies summarily to sleep.

22. It is curious how our English feeling seems to be changed also towards two other innocent kind of creatures. In nearly all German pictures of the Nativity (I have given you an Italian one of the Magi for a frontispiece, this time[1]), the dove is one way or other conspicuous, and the little angels round the cradle are nearly always, when they are tired, allowed by the Madonna to play with rabbits.[2] And in the very garden in which Ladie Gladness leads her karol-dance, "connis," as well as squirrels, are among the happy company; frogs only, as you shall hear, not being allowed; the French says, no flies either, of the watery sort! For the path among the mint and fennel greene leads us into this garden:[3]—

"The garden was by measuring,
Right even and square in compasing:
It was long as it was large,
Of fruit had every tree his charge,
And many homely trees there were,*
That peaches, coines,† and apples bare.
Medlers, plommes, peeres, chesteinis,
Cherise, of which many one faine‡ is,
With many a high laurel and pine
Was ranged clean all that gardene.
There might men Does and Roes see,
And of Squirrels ful great plentee

* There were foreign trees besides. I omit bits here and there, without putting stars to interrupt the pieces given.

† Quinces.

‡ Fond.

[1] [The plate has hitherto been lettered "Painted by Bernard of Luino, at Milan." But the fresco has been in the Louvre (No. 1360) since 1867, having been bought by Napoleon III. in that year from the Duke Antonio Litta Visconti Arese.]

[2] [See *Eagle's Nest*, § 151 (Vol. XXII. p. 225).]

[3] [*The Romaunt of the Rose*, 1349–1352, 1373–1376, 1379, 1390, 1391–1394, 1397, 1399, 1400, 1421–1428.]

From bough to bough always leping;
Connis there were also playing
And maden many a tourneying
Upon the fresh grass springing.
In places saw I wells there
In which no frogges were.
There sprang the violet all new
And fresh pervinke, rich of hue,
And flowers yellow, white and rede,
Such plenty grew there never in mede,
Full gay was all the ground, and quaint,
And poudred, as men had it peint
With many a fresh and sundry flour
That castes up full good savour."

28. So far for an old English garden, or "pleasance," and the pleasures of it. Now take a bit of description written this year of a modern English garden or pleasance, and the pleasures of *it*, and newly invented odours:—

"In a short time the sportsmen issued from the (new?) hall, and, accompanied by sixty or seventy attendants, bent their steps towards that part of the park in which the old hall is situate. Here were the rabbit covers—large patches of rank fern, three or four feet in height, and extending over many acres. The doomed rabbits, assiduously driven from the burrows during the preceding week by the keepers, forced from their lodgings beneath the tree-roots by the suffocating fumes of sulphur, and deterred from returning thither by the application of gas-tar to the "runs," had been forced to seek shelter in the fern patch; and here they literally swarmed. At the edge of the ferns a halt was called, and the head gamekeeper proceeded to arrange his assistants in the most approved 'beating' fashion. The shooting party, nine in number, including the prince, distributed themselves in advance of the line of beaters, and the word 'Forward!' was given. Simultaneously the line of beaters moved into the cover, vigorously thrashing the long ferns with their stout sticks, and giving vent to a variety of uncouth ejaculations, which it was supposed were calculated to terrify the hidden rabbits. Hardly had the beaters proceeded half-a-dozen yards when the cover in front of them became violently agitated, and rabbits were seen running in all directions. The quantity of game thus started was little short of marvellous—the very ground seemed to be alive. Simultaneously with the appearance of the terrified animals the slaughter commenced. Each sportsman carried a double-barrelled breechloader, and an attendant followed him closely, bearing an additional gun, ready loaded. The shooter discharged both barrels of his gun, in some cases with only the interval of a second or two, and immediately exchanged it for a loaded one. Rabbits fell in all directions. The warning cry of 'Rabbit!' from the relentless keepers was heard continuously, and each cry was as quickly followed by the sharp crack of a gun—a pretty sure indication that the rabbit referred to had come to an untimely end, as the majority of the sportsmen were crack shots."

24. Of course all this is quite natural to a sporting people who have learned to like the smell of gunpowder, sulphur, and gas-tar, better than that of violets and thyme. But, putting the baby-poisoning, pigeon-shooting, and rabbit-shooting of to-day in comparison with the pleasures of the German Madonna, and her simple company; and of Chaucer and his carolling company: and seeing that the present effect of peace upon earth, and well-pleasing in men, is that every nation now spends most of its income in machinery for shooting the best and bravest men, just when they were likely to have become of some use to their fathers and mothers, I put it to you, my friends all, calling you so, I suppose for the last time (unless you are disposed for friendship with Herod instead of Barabbas), whether it would not be more kind and less expensive, to make the machinery a little smaller; and adapt it to spare opium now, and expenses of maintenance and education afterwards (besides no end of diplomacy), by taking our sport in shooting babies instead of rabbits?

Believe me,
Faithfully yours,
J. RUSKIN.

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

25. The first number of *Fors Clavigera* for the year 1873 will be published (I hope) on 1st January next, and in the course of that month the Index to the two first volumes, for the years 1871, 1872, as an extra number, which will be sent gratis to subscribers to the complete work.[1]

Subscriptions to the St. George's Fund have been sent to me to the amount of £104, 1s. I have therefore sent a cheque for £100 to be added to the fund accumulating in the hands of the trustees.

I think it inexpedient at present to give the names of my—not numerous—subscribers.[2] Each of them knows his or her number in the subjoined list:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Annual, £4 (1871, 1872) . . . . | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. Annual, £20 (1871, 1872) . . . . | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Gift (1871) . . . . . | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. Gift (1872) . . . . . | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. Gift (1872) . . . . . | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Annual (1872) . . . . . | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | £104 | 1 | 0 |

It is a beginning. We shall get on in time—better than some companies that have started with large capital.

26. The following cry of distress, from a bookseller of the most extended experience, has lain all this year by me, till I could find opportunity, which has not come, for commending its sound common-sense in relation to several matters besides what it immediately touches on. It must stand on its own worth now, and is well able to do so.

"*February 28th*, 1872.

"It is often a question of considerable embarrassment for parents to know what to do with their children, and to place them in such a manner in a trade or profession as would best fit their talents and aptitudes.

"Notions of 'gentility' induce too many parents to bring up their sons for professions or the Civil Service, and their daughters for a status which they are unlikely to attain.

"I will say here only a few words to parents of the humbler classes:—Do not

[1] [There was, however, some delay in the preparation of the Index: see pp. 505, 553. It was ultimately published in September 1873: see Bibliographical Note on the Index in Vol. XXIX.]

[2] [Later on, Ruskin gave the initials of Companions and subscribers: see Letters 61, § 17, 62, § 19 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 503, 530); and finally the names of the Companions at the close of Letter 93 (Vol. XXIX. p. 477).]

be allured by advertisements into seeking for your sons appointments as clerks in offices where a boy starts at once with a salary and short hours of business. Rely upon it, these tempting offers lead to poor prospects; hence has arisen the superabundant supply of 'genteel clerks,' and the deficient supply of good mechanics. It is much to be regretted that the former practice of apprenticeship has fallen so much out of use. Better mechanics were certainly thus formed.

"There is one mechanical trade with which I am especially connected, viz., that of bookbinding. I regret to say, that an extreme difficulty exists to obtain intelligent and willing men to do the work which is ready to be given out. I ascribe this largely to a defective education of our youth. There is too much conceit amongst parents and their children as to their future in life, too much uniformity of thought, and by far too little exertion and preparation for the struggles of existence. Walking-sticks, meerschaum-pipes, and cheap sensational journals are found in the hands of strutting youngsters, who ought to be modestly attired, and who ought earnestly to prepare themselves for their future career.

"In mentioning such a trade as bookbinding, I wish to convey that it is not the heavy and idle who are wanted, but the hardy and intelligent boys; and the better they are educated, the better are their future chances of success in life.

"Being very much hampered in my pursuit as a bookseller by the want of proper execution in the binding and furbishing of books, I can speak decidedly to the fact that there is ample room for many more labourers in that interesting trade. Intelligence, honesty, and physical strength are required in starting a youth in every business; and when parents have prepared their children with these qualifications, a successful career in the bookbinding trade may be safely guaranteed.

"It is painful to me, and must be equally unpleasant to all owners of libraries, to suffer constantly from the protracted delays caused by the deficiency of good workmen in the binding business.

"Those curses of modern society,* 'Trades' Unions,' on one side, and absurd notions of gentility on the other, are doing each their share of harm in keeping down the supply of new hands.

"I repeat—more hands, 'with heads,' are wanted in the bookbinding trade. This is a cry of distress from a bookseller whose business is injured owing to the delays and the inefficiency of the existing binders and their workmen."

* Let me, however, beg you to observe, my dear Sir, that the cursing is the fault of modern society, not of Trades' Unions, which were an extreme blessing to ancient society, and will be so to all wholesome societies, for ever.

# FORS CLAVIGERA.

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## LETTERS

*TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS OF GREAT BRITAIN.*

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

VOL. III.

GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1873.

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1. Amount of subscriptions to St. George's Fund. 2. These letters written for readers in the future: *Fors Clavigera*, a mosaic-work in patches, but not without design. 3, 4. The "Word of God" not confined to any book, or collection of books. 5. The Word of God in the heart and the Divine Providence. Holy Church and Holy Tavern. 6. Use and abuse of the good "creatures" of God. 7. Avoidance by preachers of the direct issue between God and Mammon. 8, 9. Analysis of the Fourteenth Psalm. 10–12. The Fifteenth: Traveller's Rest.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.—13. The Cheap-Fuel Supply Association and its promised dividend, which the author is invited to share: what is he to be paid for? 14. Modern Improvements. 15. Price of *Fors Clavigera*. 16. Total subscriptions to St. George's Fund.

# FORS CLAVIGERA

## LETTER 25

### THE PENNY TRACT[1]

BRANTWOOD, *January 4th*, 1873.

1. THE Third Fors, having been much adverse to me, and more to many who wish me well, during the whole of last year, has turned my good and helpful printer adrift in the last month of it;[2] and, with that grave inconvenience to him, contrived for me the minor one of being a fortnight late with my New Year's letter. Under which provocation I am somewhat consoled this morning by finding in a cookery book, of date 1791, "written purely from practice, and dedicated to the Hon. Lady Elizabeth Warburton, whom the author lately served as housekeeper,"[3] a receipt for Yorkshire Goose Pie, with which I think it will be most proper and delightful to begin my economical instructions to you for the current year.

2. I am, indeed, greatly tempted to give precedence to the receipt for making "Fairy Butter," and further disturbed by an extreme desire to tell you how to construct

[1] ["Show me a Penny" (Luke xx. 24: see below, § 4) was a rejected title for this letter.]

[2] [For Ruskin's fortunes during 1872, see Vol. XXII. pp. xxv.–xxix. His "good and helpful printer" was Mr. Robert Chester; for whom, see above, p. 132 *n.*]

[3] [*The Experienced English Housekeeper, for the Use and Ease of Ladies, Housekeepers, Cooks, etc. Written purely upon practice; dedicated to the Hon. Lady Elizabeth Warburton, whom the Author lately served as Housekeeper. Consisting of Several Hundred Original Receipts, most of which never appeared in print.* . . . By Elizabeth Raffald. A new Edition. . . . London. Printed for A. Millar, W. Law, and R. Cater. M.DCC.XCI. The receipt for Goose Pie is on p. 148; those for "Fairy Butter" and "Apple Floating-Island" are on p. 258.]

an "Apple Floating-Island"; but will abide, nevertheless, by my Goose Pie:—

"Take a large fat goose, split it down the back, and take all the bones out; bone a turkey and two ducks the same way, season them very well with pepper and salt, with six woodcocks; lay the goose down on a clean dish, with the skin-side down; and lay the turkey into the goose, with the skin down; have ready a large hare, cleaned well, cut in pieces, and stewed in the oven, with a pound of butter, a quarter of an ounce of mace, beat fine, the same of white pepper, and salt to your taste, till the meat will leave the bones, and scum the butter off the gravy, pick the meat clean off, and beat it in a marble-mortar very fine, with the butter you took off; and lay it in the turkey; take twenty-four pounds of the finest flour, six pounds of butter, half a pound of fresh rendered suet, make the paste pretty thick, and raise the pie oval; roll out a lump of paste, and cut it in vine-leaves or what form you please; rub the pie with the yolks of eggs, and put your ornaments on the walls; then turn the hare, turkey, and goose upside down, and lay them in your pie, with the ducks at each end, and the woodcocks on the sides; make your lid pretty thick, and put it on; you may lay flowers, or the shape of the fowls in paste, on the lid, and make a hole in the middle of your lid; the walls of the pie are to be one inch and a half higher than the lid; then rub it all over with the yolks of eggs, and bind it round with three-fold paper, and lay the same over the top; it will take four hours' baking in a brown-bread oven; when it comes out, melt two pounds of butter in the gravy that comes from the hare, and pour it hot in the pie through a tun-dish; close it well up, and let it be eight or ten days before you cut it; if you send it any distance, make up the hole in the middle with cold butter, to prevent the air from getting in."

8. Possessed of these instructions, I immediately went to my cook to ask how far we could faithfully carry them out. But she told me nothing could be done without a "brown-bread oven"; which I shall therefore instantly build under the rocks on my way down to the lake: and, if I live, we will have a Lancashire goose-pie next Michaelmas. You may, perhaps, think this affair irrelevant to the general purposes of *Fors Clavigera;* but it is not so by any means: on the contrary, it is closely connected with its primary intentions; and, besides, may interest some readers more than weightier, or, I should rather say, lighter and more spiritual matters. For, indeed, during twenty-three months, I had been writing to you, fellow-workmen, of matters affecting your best interests in this world, and all the

interest you had, anywhere else:—explaining, as I could, what the shrewdest of you, hitherto,[1] have thought, and the best of you have done;—what the most selfish have gained, and the most generous have suffered. Of all this, no notice whatever is taken. In my twenty-fourth letter, incidentally, I mentioned the fact of my being in a bad humour[2] (which I nearly always am, and which it matters little to anybody whether I am or not, so long as I don't act upon it), and forthwith I got quite a little mailcartful of consolation, reproof, and advice. Much of it kind,—nearly all of it helpful, and some of it wise; but very little bearing on matters in hand: an eager Irish correspondent offers immediately to reply to anything, "though he has not been fortunate enough to meet with the book"; one working man's letter, for self and mates, is answered in the terminal notes:[3]—could not be answered before for want of address; —another, from a south-country clergyman, could not be answered any way, for he would not read any more, he said, of such silly stuff as *Fors*;—but would have been glad to hear of any scheme for giving people a sound practical education. I fain would learn myself, either from this practical Divine, or any of *his* mates, what the ecclesiastical idea of a sound practical education is;—that is to say, what—in week-day schools (the teaching in Sunday ones being necessarily to do no manner of work)—our clergy think that boys and girls should be taught to practise, in order that, when grown up, they may with dexterity perform the same. For indeed, the constant object of these letters of mine, from their beginning, has been to urge you to do vigorously and dextrously what was useful; and nothing but that. And I have told you of Kings and Heroes, and now am about to tell you what I can of a Saint, because I believe such persons to have done, sometimes, more useful things than you or I: begging your pardon always for not addressing you as heroes, which

[1] [Ruskin in his copy writes here, "Explain 'hitherto'—a wide word, of *all* workmen in the world."]
[2] [Letter 24, § 1 (p. 417).]
[3] [See below, § 24.]

I believe you all think yourselves, or as kings, which I presume you all propose to be, or at least, if you cannot, to let nobody else be. Come what may of such proposal, I wish you would consider with me to-day what form of "sound practical education," if any, would enable you all to be Saints; and whether, such form proving discoverable, you would really like to be put through it, or whether, on the contrary, both the clergy and you mean, verily, and in your hearts, nothing by "practical education" but how to lay one penny upon another. Not but that it does my heart good to hear modern divines exhorting to *any* kind of practice—for, as far as I can make out, there is nothing they so much dread for their congregations as their getting into their heads that God expects them to do anything, beyond killing rabbits if they are rich, and being content with bad wages, if they are poor. But if any virtue more than these (and the last *is* no small one) be indeed necessary to Saint-ship—may we not prudently ask what such virtue is, and, at this Holiday time, make our knowledge of the Ho's more precise?[1] Nay, in your pleading for perennial Holiday,—in your ten hours or eight hours bills, might you not urge your point with stouter conscience if you were all Saints, and the hours of rest you demanded became a realization of Baxter's *Saints' Rest?*

4. Suppose we *do* rest, for a few minutes, from that process of laying one penny upon another (those of us, at least, who have learned the trick of it), and look with some attention at the last penny we laid on the pile—or, if we can do no better, at the first of the pile we mean to lay.

Show me a penny;[2] or, better, show me the three pages of our British Bible, penny, shilling, and pound, and let us try what we can read on them together. You see how rich they are in picture and legend: surely so practical a nation, in its most valued scriptures, cannot have written or pictured anything but with discretion, and to the benefit of all beholders.

[1] [See Letter 24, § 7 (p. 421).]
[2] [Luke xx. 24.]

5. We begin with the penny;—not that, except under protest, I call such a thing as that a Penny! Our farthings, when we were boys, were as big as that; and two-pence filled our waistcoat pockets. Who, then, is this lady, whom it represents, sitting, apparently, on the edge of a dish-cover? Britannia? Yes,—of course. But who is Britannia? and what has she got on her head, in her hand, and on her seat?

"Don't I know who Britannia is?" Not I; and much doubt if you do! Is she Great Britain,—or Little Britain? Is she England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, and the Indies, —or a small, dishonest, tailoring and engineering firm, with no connection over the way, and publicly fined at the police court for sneakingly supplying customers it had engaged not to?[1] Is she a Queen, or an Actress, or a Slave? Is she a Nation, mother of nations; or a slimy polype, multiplying by involuntary vivisection, and dropping half putrid pieces of itself wherever it crawls or contracts? In the world-feasts of the Nativity, can she sit, Madonna-like, saying: "Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me"?[2] Or are her lips capable of such utterance—of *any* utterance—no more; the musical Rose of them cleft back into the long dumb trench of the lizard's; her motherhood summed in saying that she makes all the world's ditches dirtier with her spawn?

6. And what has she on her head, in her hand, or on that—Shield, I believe it is meant for, which she sits on the edge of? A most truly symbolic position! For, you know, all those armour-plates and guns you pay for so pleasantly are indeed made, when you look into the matter, not at all to defend you against anybody (no one ever pretends to say distinctly that the newest of them could protect you for twelve hours); but they are made that the iron-masters may get commission on the iron, and the manufacturers commission on the manufacture.[3] And so

[1] [A note in Ruskin's copy ("Fine by arbitration in American war") shows the reference to be to the Alabama Claims: see Vol. XXII. p. 140.]

[2] [Isaiah viii. 18; Hebrews ii. 13.]

[3] [On this subject, compare Letter 52, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 304); also *Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. pp. 388–389, and Vol. XIX. p. 265 *n.*]

the Ironmongering and Manufacturing Britannia does very literally sit upon her Shield: the cognizance whereof, or—now too literally—the "Bearing,"—so obscured,[1] becomes of small importance. Probably, in a little while, a convenient cushion—or, what not—may be substituted for St. George's Cross; to the public satisfaction.

7. I must not question farther what any of these symbols may come to mean; I will tell you briefly, what they meant once, and are yet, by courtesy, supposed to mean.

They were all invented by the Greeks; and all, except the Cross, some twelve hundred years before the first Christmas: they became intelligible and beautiful first about Theseus' time.

The Helmet crest properly signifies the adoption by man of the passions of pride and anger which enable nearly all the lower creatures to erect some spinous or plumose ridge upon their heads or backs. It is curiously associated with the story of the Spartan Phalanthus, the first colonist of Tarentum,[2] which might have been the port of an Italia ruling the waves, instead of Britannia, had not the crest fallen from the helmet of the Swabian prince, Manfred, in his death-battle with Charles of Anjou.[3] He had fastened it that morning, he said, with his own hand,—you may think, if his armourer had fastened it, it would have stayed on, but kings could do things with their own hands in those days;—howbeit, it fell, and Manfred, that night, put off his armour for evermore, and the evil French King reigned in his stead: and South Italy has lain desert since that day, and so must lie, till the crest of some King rise over it again, who will be content with as much horse-hair as is needful for a crest, and not wear it, as our English squires have done lately (or perhaps even the hair of an animal inferior to the horse), on their heads, instead of their helmets.[4]

[1] [As a note in Ruskin's own copy shows, the meaning is that the shield, no more a defence, becomes a mere stool, which bears the manufacturer seated on it.]

[2] [For the story of Phalanthus, and of his helmet, see Vol. XX. pp. 394–396.]

[3] [For the significance of the battle of Benevento (1266), and for Manfred's crest, see *Val d'Arno*, §§ 244, 245 (Vol. XXIII. pp. 142–143).]

[4] [Ruskin here notes in his copy, "This cut at our horsiness obscure."]

8. Of the trident in Britannia's hand, and why it must *be* a trident, that is to say, have three prongs, and no more; and in what use or significance it differs from other forks (as for pitching, or toasting)—we will inquire at another time.[1] Take up next the shilling, or, more to our purpose, the double shilling,—get a new florin,[2] and examine the sculpture and legend on that.

The Legend, you perceive, is on the one side English, —on the other Latin. The latter, I presume, you are not intended to read, for not only it is in a dead language, but two words are contracted, and four more indicated only by their first letters. This arrangement leaves room for the ten decorative letters, an M, and a D, and three C's, and an L, and the sign of double stout, and two I's; of which ten letters the total function is to inform you that the coin was struck this year (as if it mattered either to you or to me, when it was struck!). But the poor fifth part of ten letters, preceding—the F and D, namely—have for function to inform you that Queen Victoria is the Defender of our Faith. Which is an all-important fact to you and me, if it be a fact at all;—nay, an all-important brace of facts; each letter vocal, for its part, with one. F, that we have a Faith to defend; D, that our monarch can defend it, if we chance to have too little to say for it ourselves. For both which facts, Heaven be praised, if they be indeed so,—nor dispraised by our shame, if they have ceased to be so: only, if they be so, two letters are not enough to assert them clearly; and if not so, are more than enough to lie with. On the reverse of the coin, however, the legend is full, and clear. "One Florin." "One Tenth of a Pound." Yes; that is all very practical and instructive. But do we know either what a pound is, or what a florin or "Fiorino" was, or why this particular coin

[1] [This was not done. The trident which Poseidon bore as ruler of the waves seems to have been the harpoon of the tunny and dolphin fishers: see Æschylus, *Septem contra Thebas*, 131, and compare *Persæ*, 426.]

[2] [The florin, that is, of Victoria, previous to the Jubilee coinages of 1887 and 1897. It was the "new florin," because it had been substituted for the one issued in 1849, which raised a storm of indignation owing to the omission of the letters D. G. (Dei Gratia) and was thus known as the godless, or graceless, florin.]

should be called a Florin, or whether we have any right to call *any* coin of England, now, by that name? And, by the way, how is it that I get continually reproved for writing above the level of the learning of my general readers, when here I find the most current of all our books written in three languages, of which one is dead, another foreign, and the third written in defunct letters, so that anybody with two shillings in his pocket is supposed able to accept information conveyed in contracted Latin, Roman numerals, old English, and spoiled Italian?

9. How practical, and how sentimental, at once! For indeed we have no right, except sentimentally, to call that coin a florin,—that is to say, a "flower (lily-flower) piece," or Florence-piece. What have *we* any more to do with Lilies? Do you ever consider how they grow[1]—or care how they die? Do the very water-lilies, think you, keep white now, for an hour after they open, in any stream in England? And for the heraldry of the coin, neither on that, nor any other, have we courage or grace to bear the Fleur-de-Lys any more, it having been once our first bearing of all. For in the first quarter of our English shield we used to bear three golden lilies on a blue ground, being the regal arms of France (our great Kings being Frenchmen, and claiming France as their own, before England). Also these Fleur-de-Lys were from the beginning the ensigns of a King; but those three Lions, which, you see, are yet retained for the arms of England on two of the shields in your false florin (false in all things, for heaven knows, we have as little right to lions now as to lilies), "are deduced onely from Dukedomes:* I say deduced, because the Kings of England after the Conquest did beare two leopards (the ensignes of the Dukedome of Normandy) till the time of King Henry the Second, who, according to the received opinion, by marriage of Eleanor, daughter and heire of the duke of Aquitaine and Guyon" (Guienne) "annexed the

* Guillim, Ed. 1638 [p. 426].

[1] [Compare Matthew vi. 28; Luke xii. 27.]

Lyon, her paternall coate, being of the same Field, Metall, and Forme with the Leopards, and so from thence forward they were jointly marshalled in one Shield and Blazoned three Lyons." Also "at the first quartering of these coats by Edward the Third, question being moved of his title to France, the King had good cause to put that coat in the first ranke, to show his most undoubted Title to that Kingdom, and therefore would have it the most perspicuous place of his Escocheon."

But you see it is now on our shield no more,—we having been beaten into cowardly and final resignation of it, at the peace of Amiens, in George III.'s time, and precisely in the first year of this supreme nineteenth century. He, as monarch of England, being unable to defend our Lilies, and the verbal instruction of the pacific angel Gabriel of Amiens, as he dropped his lilies, being, to the English accordingly,[1] that thenceforward they were to "hate a Frenchman as they did the Devil,"[2] which, as you know, was Nelson's notion of the spirit in which England expected every man to do his duty.

10. Next to the three Lions, however (all of them, you find, French), there is a shield bearing one Lion, "Rampant"—that is to say, climbing like a vine on a wall. Remember that the proper sense of the word "rampant" is "creeping" as you say it of ground ivy, and such plants:[3] and that a lion rampant—whether British, or, as this one, Scotch, is not at all, for his part, in what you are so fond of getting into—"an independent position," nor even in a specifically leonine one, but rather generally feline, as of a cat, or other climbing animal on a tree; whereas the three French Lions, or Lioncels,[4] are "passant-gardant," "passing on the look out," as beasts of chase.

[1] [Here Ruskin notes in his copy, "Too obscure. This ("that thenceforward," etc.) I mean to be the message of the Angel Annunciate (Gabriel) to us."]

[2] [For this saying of Nelson's, see Vol. XVII. p. 462.]

[3] [Compare the title of Lecture VII. ("Marble Rampant"), and § 296 in *Val d'Arno* (Vol. XXIII. p. 176).]

[4] ["In the Blazoning of Armes consisting of more Lions in a Field than one, you must terme them Lioncels" (Guillim's *Heraldrie*, p. 173, 1724 edition).]

11. Round the rampant Scottish animal (I can't find why the Scotch took him for their type[1]) you observe farther, a double line, with—though almost too small to be seen—fleur-de-lys at the knots and corners of it. This is the tressure, or binding belt, of the great Charles, who has really been to both English and Scottish lions what that absent Charles of the polar skies must, I suppose, have been to their Bear, and who entirely therefore deserves to be stellified by British astronomers.[2]

That Tressure, heraldically, records the alliance of Charlemagne with the Scottish King Achaius,[3] and the vision

[1] [The origin of the lion of Scotland is still obscure, as also is that of the tressure, and none of the accounts given of the Scottish arms are historical: see *Heraldry in Relation to Scottish History and Art*, by Sir James Balfour Paul (Lord Lyon King of Arms), 1900, pp. 50 *seq.* In a diary of a later date (January 1875) Ruskin makes the following note:—

"The Lion Rampant of Scotland occurs first on the great seal of Alex. II. (1214–1249), and is not on the seal of his predecessor William the Lion, who may have been called so for introducing it. But no one knows."]

[2] [For Charles's Wain, see Letter 24, § 3 (p. 418).]

[3] [Here Ruskin accepts the account given by R. Henry (*History of Great Britain*, 1774), book ii. ch. i. § 2, who says that Eochol, called Achaius, reigned 787–817, and had an alliance with Charlemagne: see the authorities cited by Henry, vol. ii. p. 44 *n.*, and also *The Theater of Honour and Knighthood*, written in French by Andrew Favine (English translation, 1623), pp. 78, 79)—the legendary account being that, in recognition of the services rendered by the Scots, the French King added to the Scottish lion the double tressure fleur-de-lisée, to show that the lion had defended the French lilies, and that the latter would surround the lion and defend him. For another reference to this, see Letter 94, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 482). The story of St. Andrew's Cross is, however, traditionally connected with Angus MacFergus, King of the Picts (called Unuist or Hungus in the Chronicles), who is supposed to have reigned 731–761 (Charlemagne reigned 768–814). He is said to have received a celestial vision (like that of Constantine the Great) of St. Andrew's Cross, and in consequence to have founded St. Andrews, and adopted St. Andrew's Cross as the national emblem. The "Legend of St. Andrew" is printed at pp. 138 *seq.* of W. F. Skene's *Chronicles of the Picts and other Early Memorials of Scottish History*, 1867. But the chronicles of all this period are confusing. The legend of the Thistle is that the Danes were making a secret midnight attack, when one of their men set his foot on a thistle and cried out. This gave the alarm, and the Scots fell upon the enemy and defeated them. For an historical note on the adoption of the Thistle as the national badge, see *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 299. On the Rue, Favine (p. 96) says: "Achaius, having won the love and alliance of King Charlemaigne, found himself to be so strong and mighty that he took for his device the Thistle and the Rewe"—the Thistle to show that "he feared not foreign princes, seeing he leaned on the succour and alliance of the French"; the Rue, on account of its "admirable virtues" of healing, to "demonstrate to his enemies that he had power to make all their practices unprofitable." The rue, however, was never a part of the Scottish arms. Its appearance as one of the ornaments on the collar of the Order of the Thistle, or St. Andrew, is thought by some antiquaries to be due merely to an atrocious pun on the word Andrew, the collar being composed of Thistles "*and Rue.*"]

by the Scottish army of St. Andrew's cross—and the adoption of the same, with the Thistle and Rue, for their national device; of all which the excellent Scotch clergyman and historian, Robert Henry, giving no particular account, prefers to note, as an example of such miraculous appearances in Scotland, the introduction, by King Kenneth, the son of Alpine, of a shining figure "clothed in the skins of dried fish, which shone in the dark," to his nobility and councillors, to give them heavenly admonitions "after they had composed themselves to rest."[1] Of course a Presbyterian divine must have more pleasure in recording a miracle so connected with the existing national interests of the herring and salmon fisheries, than the tradition of St. Andrew's cross; and that tradition itself is so confused among Rodericks, Alpines, and Ferguses, that the *Lady of the Lake* is about as trustworthy historical reading. But St. Andrew's cross and the Thistle (I don't know when the Rue, much the more honourable bearing of the two, was dropped)—are there, you see, to this day; and you must learn their story—but I've no time to go into that, now.[2]

12. For England, the tressure really implies, though not in heraldry, more than for Scotland. For the Saxon seven kingdoms had fallen into quite murderous anarchy in Charlemagne's time, and especially the most religious of them, Northumberland; which then included all the country between the Frith of Forth and the Cheviots commanded by the fortress of Edwin's Burg (fortress now always standing in a rampant manner on its hind legs, as the Modern Athens[3]). But the pious Edwin's spirit had long left his burg, and the state of the whole district from which the Saxon angels (non Angli[4]) had gone forth

[1] [*The History of Great Britain*, by Robert Henry, D.D., Edinburgh, 1774, vol. ii. p. 61.]

[2] [Nor did Ruskin return to the subject.]

[3] [For this name, see Vol. XII. p. 65 *n*. The name is due even more to the situation of the city than to the architecture of some of its buildings.]

[4] [For another reference to this saying of St. Gregory ("Non Angli sed angeli"), see Vol. XVII. p. 406 *n*. The whole story may be read in Sharon Turner's *History of England*, vol. i., 1839, pp. 335–336.]

pleasant to you, or another kind of country? Was there any coal in that earth of Venice, for instance? Any gas to be made out of it? Any iron?

Again. What does Shakespeare mean by a "pure" soul, or by Purity in general? How does a soul become pure, or clean, and how dirty? Are you sure that your own soul is pure? if not, is its opinion on the subject of purity likely to be the same as Shakespeare's? And might you not just as well read a mure soul, or demure, or a scure soul, or obscure, as a pure soul, if you don't know what Shakespeare means by the word?

Again. What does Shakespeare mean by a captain, or head-person?[1] What were his notions of head-ship, shoulder-ship, or foot-ship, either in human or divine persons? Have you yourselves ever seen a captain, think you—of the true quality (see above, 22, § 20); and did you know him when you saw him?

Or again. What does Shakespeare mean by colours? The "gaily decorative bunting" of Howe and Cushing's American Circus?[2] Or the banners with invigorating inscriptions concerning Temperance and Free-trade, under which you walk in procession, sometimes, after a band? Or colours more dim and tattered than these?

16. What he does mean, in all these respects, we shall best understand by reading a little bit of the history of one of those English Squires, named above, for our study (22, § 20), Edward III. of England namely; since it was he who first quartered our arms for us; whom I cannot more honourably first exhibit to you than actually fighting under captainship and colours of his own choice, in the fashion Shakespeare meant.

*Under* captainship, mark you, though himself a King, and a proud one. Which came to pass thus:[3] "When the King of England heard these news" (that Geoffrey of Chargny

[1] [On "captain" in this sense, compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 317.]
[2] [See Letter 24, § 7 (p. 422).]
[3] [Here Ruskin translates for himself: see chaps. cxlix., cl., vol. i. pp. 376–381 in the translation by Johnes (1803).]

was drawing near his dear town of Calais, and that Amery of Pavia, the false Lombard, was keeping him in play), "then the King set out from England with 800 men at arms, and 600 archers, and took ship at Dover, and by vespers arrived at Calais, and put his people in ambush in the castle, and was with them himself. And said to the Lord de Manny: 'Master Walter, I will that you should be the *head* in this need, for I and my son will fight under your banner.'* Now My Lord Geoffrey of Chargny had left Arras on the last day of December, in the evening, with all his gens-d'-armes, and came near Calais about one in the morning,—and he said to his knights,† 'Let the Lombard open the gates quickly—he makes us die of cold.' 'In God's name,' said Pepin de Werre, 'the Lombards are cunning folks;—he will look at your florins first, to see that none are false.' (You see how important this coin is; here is one engraved for you therefore—pure Florentine gold[1]—that you may look at it honestly, and not like a Lombard.) And at these words came the King of England, and his son at his side, under the banner of Master Walter de Manny; and there were other banners with them, to wit, the Count of Stafford's, the Count of Suffolk's, My Lord John de Montagu's, My Lord Beauchamp's, and the Lord de la Werre's, and no more, that day. When the French saw them come out, and heard the cry, 'Manny, to the rescue,' they knew they were betrayed.‡ Then said Master Geoffrey to his people, 'Lords, if we fly, we are lost; it is best to fight with good will;—hope is, we may gain the day. 'By

*Fig.* 10

* The reason of this honour to Sir Walter was that he had been the first English knight who rode into France after the king had quartered the Fleur-de-Lys.

† I omit much, without putting stars, in these bits of translation.

‡ Not unfairly; only having to fight for their Calais instead of getting in for a bribe.

[1] [On the gold florin of Florence, see *Val d'Arno*, § 117 (Vol. XXIII. p. 71).]

who gave me so much work, body to body, as you did to-day. So I give you the prize of the day, and that over all the knights of my own court, by just sentence.' Thereupon the King took off the chaplet, that he wore (which was good and rich), and put it on the head of My Lord Eustace; and said, 'My Lord Eustace, I give you this chaplet,[1] for that you have been the best fighter to-day of all those without or within, and I pray you that you wear it all this year for the love of me. I know well that you are gay, and loving, and glad to be among dames and damsels. So therefore say to them whither-soever you go, that I gave it you; and so I quit you of your prison, and you may set forth to-morrow if it please you.'"

17. Now, if you have not enjoyed this bit of historical study, I tell you frankly, it is neither Edward the Third's fault, nor Froissart's, nor mine, but your own, for not having cheerfulness, loyalty, or generosity enough in you to understand what is going on. But even supposing you have these, and *do* enjoy the story as now read, it does not at all follow that you would enjoy it at your Literary Institute. There you would find, most probably, a modern abstract of the matter given in polished language. You would be fortunate if you chanced on so good a history as Robert Henry's above referred to,[2] which I always use myself, as intelligent, and trustworthy for general reference. But hear his polished account of this supper at Calais:—

"As Edward was a great admirer of personal valour, he ordered all the French knights and gentlemen to be feasted by the Prince of Wales, in the great hall of the castle. The King entered the hall in the time of the banquet, and discovered to his prisoners that he had been present in the late conflict, and was the person who had fought hand to hand with the Sieur Ribaumont. Then, addressing himself to that gentleman, he gave him his liberty, presented him with a chaplet adorned with pearls, which he desired him to wear for his sake, and declared him to be the most expert and valorous knight with whom he had ever engaged."[3]

[1] [Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 198 (Vol. XXIII. p. 117), where Ruskin again notes this incident.]
[2] [§ 11.]
[3] [Book iv. ch. i. § 4 (vol. iv. p. 186, 1781).]

18. Now, supposing you can read no other history than such as this, you had—with profoundest earnestness I say it—infinitely better read none. It is not the least necessary for you to know anything about Edward III.; but quite necessary for you to know something vital and real about somebody; and not to have polished language given you instead of life. "But you *do* enjoy it, in Froissart?" And you think it would have been, to you also, a "pleasure to see" that fight between Edward and the Sieur de Ribaumont? So be it: now let us compare with theirs, a piece of modern British fighting, done under no banner, and in no loyalty nor obedience, but in the independent spirit of freedom, and yet which, I think, it would have been no pleasure to any of us to see. As we compared, before, loyal with free justice,[1] so let us now compare loyal with free fighting. The most active of the contending parties are of your own class, too, I am sorry to say, and that the *Telegraph* (16th Dec.) calls them many hard names; but I can't remedy this without too many inverted commas.

"Four savages—four brute beasts in human form we should rather say—named Slane, Rice, Hays, and Beesley, ranging in age between thirty-two and nineteen years, have been sentenced to death for the murder on the 6th of November last, at a place called Spennymoor, of one Joseph Waine. The convicts are Irishmen, and had been working as puddlers in the iron foundries. The principal offender was the ruffian Slane, who seems to have had some spite against the deceased, a very sober, quiet man, about forty years of age, who, with his wife and son, kept a little chandler's shop at Spennymoor. Into this shop Slane came one night, grossly insulted Waine, ultimately dragged him from the shop into a dark passage, tripped him up, holding his head between his legs, and then whistled for his three confederates. When Rice, Hays, and Beesley appeared on the scene, they were instructed by the prime savage to hold Waine down—the wretch declaring, 'If I get a running kick at him, it shall be his last.' The horrible miscreant did get a 'running kick'—nay, more than a dozen—at his utterly powerless victim; and when Slane's strength was getting exhausted the other three wretches set upon Waine, kicking him in the body with their hob-nailed boots, while the poor agonised wife strove vainly to save her husband. A lodger in the house, named Wilson, at last interfered, and the savages ran away. The object of their brutality lived just twenty-five minutes after the outrage, and the post-mortem examination

[1] [See Letter 13, §§ 14–16 (pp. 238–241).]

showed that all the organs were perfectly healthy, and that death could only have arisen from the violence inflicted on Waine by these fiends, who were plainly identified by the widow and her son. It may be noticed, however, as a painfully significant circumstance, that the lodger Wilson, who was likewise a labouring man, and a most important witness for the prosecution, refused to give evidence, and, before the trial came on, absconded altogether."

19. Among the epithets bestowed by the *Telegraph*,—very properly—but unnecessarily, on these free British Operatives, there is one which needs some qualification;—that of "Miscreant,"[1] or "Misbeliever," which is only used accurately of Turks or other infidels, whereas it is probable these Irishmen were zealously religious persons, Evangelical or Catholic. But the perversion of the better faith by passion is indeed a worse form of "misbelieving" than the obedient keeping of a poorer creed;[2] and thus the word, if understood not of any special heresy, but of powerlessness to believe, with strength of imagination, in *anything*, goes to the root of the matter; which I must wait till after Christmas to dig for, having much else on my hands.

*26th December*, 1872, 8, *Morning*.

20. The first quiet and pure light that has risen this many a day, was increasing through the tall stems of the trees of our garden, which is walled by the walls of old Oxford;[3] and a bird (I am going to lecture on ornithology next term, but don't know *what* bird, and couldn't go to ask the gardener) singing steady, sweet, momentary notes, in a way that would have been very pleasant to me, once. And as I was breathing out of the window, thrown up as high as I could (for my servant had made me an enormous fire, as servants always do on hot mornings), and looking at the bright sickle of a moon, fading as she rose, the verse

[1] [On this word, see above, p. 81 *n*.]
[2] [Compare below, p. 547.]
[3] [Compare Vol. XVIII. p. 517 *n*., where Ruskin again refers to the *old city* walls in the garden of Corpus. The lectures on ornithology—*Love's Meinie* (Vol. XXV.)—were given in March and May 1873.]

came into my mind,—I don't in the least know why,—"Lifting up holy hands, without wrath, and doubting";[1]—which chanced to express in the most precise terms what I want you to feel, about Edward III.'s fighting (though St. Paul is speaking of prayer, not of fighting, but it's all the same); as opposed to this modern British fighting, which is the lifting up of unholy hands,—feet, at least,—*in* wrath, and doubting. Also, just the minute before, I had upset my lucifer-match box, a nasty brown tin thing, containing, as the spiteful Third Fors would have it—just two hundred and sixty-six wax matches, half of which being in a heap on the floor, and the rest all at cross purposes, had to be picked up, put straight and repacked, and at my best time for other work. During this operation, necessarily deliberate, I was thinking of my correspondent's query (see terminal notes) respecting what I meant by doing anything "in a hurry."[2] I mean essentially doing it in hurry of *mind*,—"doubting" whether we are doing it fast enough,—not knowing exactly how fast we can do it, or how slowly it *must* be done, to be done well. You cannot pack a lucifer box, nor make a dish of stir-about, nor knead a brown loaf, but with patience; nor meet even the most pressing need, but with coolness. Once, when my father was coming home from Spain, in a merchant ship, and in mid-bay of Biscay, the captain and passengers being at dinner, the sea did something or other to the ship which showed that the steersman was not minding what he was about. The captain jumped straight over the table, went on deck, and took the helm. Now I do not mean that he ought to have gone round the table, but that, if a good captain, as he took the wheel, he would not miss his grasp of the spokes by snatching at them an instant too soon.

And you will find that St. Paul's "without doubting"—for which, if you like, you may substitute, "by, or in, faith," covers nearly every definition of right action—and

[1] [1 Timothy ii. 8.]
[2] [See Letter 24, § 14 (p. 426).]

also that it is not possible to have this kind of faith unless one can add—as he does—"having faith, and a good conscience."[1] It does not at all follow that one must be doing a right thing; that will depend on one's sense and information; but one must be doing deliberately a thing we entirely *suppose* to be right, or we shall not do it becomingly.

21. Thus, observe, I enter into no question at present as to the absolute rightness of King Edward's fighting, which caused, that day, at Calais, the deaths of more than four hundred innocent men; nor as to the absolute wrongness of the four Irishmen's fighting, which causes only the death of one (who also may, for aught I know, have done something really seeming evil to the dull creatures)—but there is no doubt that the King fought wholly without wrath, and without doubting his rightness; and they with vile wrath, and miserable consciousness of doing wrong; and that you have in the two scenes, as perfect types as I can put before you of entirely good ancient French breeding, and entirely bad modern British breeding.

22. Breeding;—observe the word; I mean it literally; involving first the race—and then the habits *enforced* in youth: entirely excluding intellectual conclusions. The "breeding" of a man is what he gets from the Centaur Chiron; the "beastly" part of him in a good sense;—that which makes him courageous by instinct, true by instinct, loving by instinct, as a Dog is; and therefore felicitously above, or below (whichever you like to call it), all questions of philosophy and divinity.

23. And of both the Centaur Chiron, and St. George, one, the typical Greek tutor of gentlemen, and the other, the type of Christian gentlemen, I meant to tell you in this letter; and the Third Fors won't let me, yet, and I scarcely know when;[2] for before we leave King Edward, lest you should suppose I mean to set him up for a saint instead

[1] [1 Timothy i. 19.]

[2] [The story of St. George is given in the next Letter; that of the Centaur Chiron is not told in *Fors*, but see "The Riders of Tarentum" (Vol. XX. pp. 390 *seq.*).]

of St. George, you must hear the truth of his first interview with Alice of Salisbury[1] (he had seen her married, but not noticed her then, particularly[2]), wherein you will see *him* becoming doubtful, and of little faith, or distorted faith, "miscreant"; but the lady Alice no wise doubtful; wherefore she becomes worthy to give the shield of England its "tressure" and St. George's company their watchword, as aforesaid.

But her story must not be told in the same letter with that of our modern British courage; and now that I think of it St. George's had better be first told in February, when I hope some crocuses will be up, and an amaryllis or two, St. George having much interest in both.[3]

[1] [For the story of Alice of Salisbury, see Letter 31, § 10 (p. 569); and for a note by Ruskin on the reference to her here, above, p. 347 *n.*]

[2] [This is a gloss by Ruskin upon Froissart, who says, indeed, that the king had given her in marriage to the Earl of Salisbury, but not that he was present on the occasion: see below, p. 572 *n.*]

[3] [For the special interest of St. George, as enemy of the crocodile, in crocuses, see p. 484; for his interest in "the flowers of the field," p. 488. In specifying the amaryllis, Ruskin is thinking no doubt of the association of lilies with chivalry.]

24. In an interesting letter "for self and mates" a Manchester working man asks me the meaning of "Fors Clavigera" (surely enough explained in 2, § 2), and whether I mean by vulgarity "commonness," and why I say that doing anything in a hurry is vulgar.[1] I do not mean by vulgarity, commonness. A daisy is common, and a baby, not uncommon. Neither is vulgar. Has my correspondent really no perception of the difference between good breeding and vulgarity?—if he will tell me this, I will try to answer him more distinctly: meantime, if in the Salford Library there is a copy of my *Modern Painters*, let him look at Vol. V., Part IX., Chap. VII.[2]

He says also that he and his mates *must* do many things in a hurry.

I know it. But do they suppose such compulsion is a law of Heaven? or that, if not, it is likely to last?

I was greatly pleased by Mr. Affleck's letter,[3] and would have told him so; only he gave me his address in Gordon Street, without telling me of what town. His postmark was Galashiels, which I tried, and Edinburgh; but only with embarrassment to Her Majesty's service.

25. Another communication, very naïve and honest, came from a Republican of literary tastes, who wished to assist me in the development of my plans in *Fors;* and, in the course of resulting correspondence, expressed his willingness to answer any questions I might wish to put to him. I answered that I imagined myself, as far as I thought needful for me, acquainted with his opinions; but that perhaps he might wish to know something more definite about mine, and that if he liked to put any questions to *me*, I would do my best to reply intelligibly. Whereupon, apparently much pleased, he sent me the following eleven interrogations, to each of which I have accordingly given solution, to the best of my ability.

1. "Can the world—its oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, continents, islands, or portions thereof, be rightfully treated by human legislators as the 'private property' of individuals?"

*Ans.* Certainly. Else would man be more wretched than the beasts, who at least have dens of their own.

[1] [See Letter 24, § 14 (p. 426); and compare, above, p. 467.]

[2] [See in this edition Vol. VII. pp. 343-362; and compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 28 (Vol. XVIII. p. 79).]

[3] [Another correspondent, not elsewhere referred to, so that the subject of his letter does not appear.]

2. "Should cost be the limit of price?"

*Ans.* It never was, and never can be. So we need not ask whether it should be.

3. "Can one man rightfully tax another man?"

*Ans.* By all means. Indeed, I have seldom heard of anybody who would tax himself.

4. "Can a million men rightfully tax other men?"

*Ans.* Certainly, when the other men are not strong enough to tax the million.

5. "Should not each adult inhabitant of a country (who performs service equivalent in value to his or her use of the service of other inhabitants) have electoral rights granted equal to those granted to any other inhabitant?"

*Ans.* Heaven forbid! It is not everybody one would set to choose a horse, or a pig. How much less a member of Parliament?

6. "Is it not an injustice for a State to require, or try to enforce, allegiance to the State from self-supporting adults, who have never been permitted to share in the framing or endorsing of the laws they are expected to obey?"

*Ans.* Certainly not. Laws are usually most beneficial in operation on the people who would have most strongly objected to their enactment.[1]

7. "The Parliament of this country is now almost exclusively composed of representatives of the classes whose time is mostly occupied in consuming and destroying. Is this statement true? If true—is it right that it should be so?"

*Ans.* The statement is untrue. A railway navvy consumes usually about six times as much as an average member of Parliament; and I know nothing which members of Parliament kill, except time, which other people would not kill, if they were allowed to. It is the Parliamentary tendency to preservation, rather than to destruction, which I have mostly heard complained of.

8. "The State undertakes the carriage and delivery of letters. Would it be just as consistent and advisable for the State to undertake the supply of unadulterated and wholesome food, clean and healthy dwellings, elementary, industrial, and scientific instruction, medical assistance, a national paper money, and other necessities?"

*Ans.* All most desirable. But the tax-gatherers would have a busy life of it!

9. "Should not a State represent the co-operation of all the people of a country, for the benefit of all?"

*Ans.* You mean, I suppose, by "a State" the Government of a State. The Government cannot "represent" such co-operation; but can enforce it, and should.

10. "Is the use of scarce metals as material of which to make 'currency,' economical and beneficent to a nation?"

*Ans.* No; but often necessary: see *Munera Pulveris*, chap. iii.[2]

[1] [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 80 (Vol. XIX. p. 127), where Ruskin says that Liberty is desired most by those least fit for it.]

[2] [Vol. XVII. p. 197.]

11. "Is that a right condition of a people, their laws, and their money which makes 'interest' for use of money legal and possible to obtain?"

*Ans.* See *Fors Clavigera*, throughout, which indeed I have written to save you the trouble of asking questions on such subjects.[1]

It might be well if my Republican correspondent, for his own benefit, would write down an exact definition of the following terms used by him:—

1. "Private property."
2. "Tax."
3. "State."

[1] [See Letter 29, § 16 (p. 543), for "comments of my inquisitive Republican acquaintance on my endeavours to answer his questions."]

## LETTER 26

### CROCUS AND ROSE[1]

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, *3rd January*, 1873.

1. "BY St. George," said the English, "you say true!"[2]

If, by the same oath, the English could still, nowadays, both say and do true,[3] themselves, it would be a merrier England. I hear from those of my acquaintance who are unhappy enough to be engaged in commercial operations, that their correspondents are "failing in all directions."

Failing! What business has *any*body to fail?

I observe myself to be getting into the habit of always thinking the last blockheadism I hear, or think of, the biggest. But this system of mercantile credit, invented simply to give power and opportunity to rogues, and enable them to live upon the wreck of honest men—was ever anything like it in the world before? That the wretched, impatient, scrambling idiots, calling themselves commercial men, forsooth, should not be able so much as to see this plainest of all facts, that any given sum of money will be as serviceable to commerce in the pocket of the seller of the goods, as of the buyer; and that nobody gains one farthing by "credit" in the long run.[4] It is precisely as great a loss to commerce that every seller has to wait six months for his money, as it is a gain to commerce that every buyer should keep his money six months in his

[1] [See below, §§ 13, 14. A discarded title for this Letter was "St. George's Story" (see § 9).]

[2] [See the passage from Froissart in the preceding letter, pp. 461, 462.]

[3] ["Things (understood)."—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

[4] [On this subject, see the additional passage in Appendix 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 535).]

pocket. In reality there is neither gain nor loss—except by roguery, when the gain is all to the rogue, and the loss to the true man.

In all wise commerce, payment, large or small, should be over the counter. If you can't pay for a thing—don't buy it. If you can't get paid for it—don't sell it. So, you will have calm days, drowsy nights, all the good business you have now, and none of the bad.

2. (Just as I am correcting this sheet I get a lovely illuminated circular, printed in blue and red, from Messrs. Howell, James, and Co., silk mercers, etc., to the Royal Family, which respectfully announces that their half-yearly clearance sale

and continues one month, and that THE WHOLE OF THE VALUABLE STOCK WILL BE COMPLETELY OVERHAULED, AND LARGE PORTIONS SUBJECTED TO SUCH REDUCTIONS IN PRICE, AS WILL ENSURE THEIR BEING DISPOSED OF PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE APPROACHING SPRING SEASON. EACH DEPARTMENT WILL PRESENT SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS IN THE WAY OF BARGAINS, AND LADIES WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY OF PURCHASING THE HIGHEST CLASS OF GOODS AT PRICES QUITE AS LOW AS THOSE OF INFERIOR MANUFACTURE. What a quite beautiful and generally satisfactory commercial arrangement, most obliging H. and J.!)

3. If, however, for the nonce, you chance to have such a thing as a real "pound" in your own pocket, besides the hypothetical pounds you have in other people's—put it on the table, and let us look at it together.

As a piece of mere die-cutting, that St. George is one of the best bits of work we have on our money.* But as

* The best is on George III.'s pound, 1820; the most finished in work on George IV.'s crown-piece, 1821.

a design,—how brightly comic it is! The horse looking abstractedly into the air, instead of where precisely it *would* have looked, at the beast between its legs: St. George, with nothing but his helmet on (being the last piece of armour he is likely to want), putting his naked feet, at least his feet showing their toes through the buskins, well forward, that the dragon may with the greatest convenience get a bite at them; and about to deliver a mortal blow at him with a sword which cannot reach him by a couple of yards,—or, I think, in George III.'s piece, with a field-marshal's truncheon.

4. Victor Carpaccio had other opinions on the likelihood of matters in this battle. His St. George[1] exactly reverses the practice of ours. He rides armed, from shoulder to heel, in proof—but *without* his helmet. For the real difficulty in dragon-fights, as you shall hear, is not so much to kill your dragon, as to *see* him; at least to see him in time, it being too probable that he will see you first.[2] Carpaccio's St. George will have his eyes about him, and his head free to turn this way or that. He meets his dragon at the gallop—catches him in the mouth with his lance—carries him backwards off his fore feet, with the spear point out at the back of his neck. But Victor Carpaccio had seen knights tilting; and poor Pistrucci,[3] who designed this St. George for us, though he would have been a good sculptor in luckier circumstances, had only seen them presenting addresses as my Lord Mayor and killing turtle instead of dragon.

5. And, to our increasing sorrow, modern literature is as unsatisfactory in its picturing of St. George as modern art. Here is Mr. Emerson's bas-relief of the Saint, given

[1] [For Ruskin's study of Carpaccio's "St. George," see Plate LX. in Vol. XXIV. (p. 340); and for descriptions of the picture, *ibid.*, §§ 168, 223–241 (pp. 340, 383–400).]

[2] [See below, p. 483.]

[3] [Benedetto Pistrucci (1784–1855), gem-engraver and medallist, chief engraver to the Royal Mint from 1817 onwards. For another criticism of Pistrucci's design, see Vol. XXVI. p. 563.]

in his *English Traits*,[1] a book occasionally wise, and always observant as to matters actually proceeding in the world; but thus, in its ninth chapter, calumnious of our Georgie faith:—

"George of Cappadocia, born at Epiphania in Cilicia, was a low parasite, who got a lucrative contract to supply the army with bacon.[2] A rogue and informer; he got rich, and was forced to run from justice. He saved his money, embraced Arianism, collected a library, and got promoted by a faction to the episcopal throne of Alexandria. When Julian came, A.D. 361, George was dragged to prison. The prison was burst open by the mob, and George was lynched, as he deserved. And this precious knave became in good time, Saint George of England—patron of chivalry, emblem of victory and civility, and the pride of the best blood of the modern world!"

Here is a goodly patron of our dainty doings in Hanover Square! If all be indeed as our clear-sighted, unimaginative American cousin tells us. But if all *be* indeed so, what conclusion would our American cousin draw from it? The sentence is amusing—the facts (*if* facts), surprising. But what is to follow? Mr. Emerson's own conclusion is "that nature trips us up when we strut."[3] But that is, in the first place, untrue absolutely, for Nature teaches all cock-sparrows, and their like (who are many), to strut; and never without wholesome effect on the minds of hen-sparrows, and their like, who are likewise many. But in its relative, if not absolute, truth, is this the conclusion here wisely to be gathered? Are "chivalry, victory, civility, and the pride of the best blood of the modern world," generally to be described as "strutting"? And is the discovery of the peculations of George of Cilicia a wholesome reproof, administered by nature, to those unnatural modes of thinking and feeling?

6. Mr. Emerson does not think so. No modern person has truer instinct for heroism than he: nay, he is the only man I know of, among all who ever looked at books of

[1] [Chapter IX.: "Cockayne."]

[2] [See *St. Mark's Rest*, § 46 (Vol. XXIV. p. 244), where Ruskin in a note refers to this Letter.]

[3] [See the same chapter of *English Traits* (p. 85, 1856 edition).]

mine, who had nobleness enough to understand and believe the story of Turner's darkening his own picture that it might not take the light out of Lawrence's.[1] The level of vulgar English temper is now sunk so far below the power of doing such a thing, that I never told the story yet, in general society, without being met by instant and obstinate questioning of its truth, if not by quiet incredulity. But men with "the pride of the best blood of England" can believe it; and Mr. Emerson believes it. And yet this chivalry, and faith, and fire of heart, recognized by him as existent, confuse themselves in his mind with effete Gothic tradition; and are all "tripped up" by his investigation, itself superficial, of the story of St. George. In quieter thought, he would have felt that the chivalry and victory, being themselves real, must have been achieved, at some time or another, by a real chevalier and victor,—nay, by thousands of chevaliers and victors. That instead of one St. George, there must have been armies of St. Georges; —that this vision of a single Knight was as securely the symbol of knights innumerable, as the one Dragon, of sins and trials innumerable; and no more depended for its vitality, or virtue, on the behaviour of George of Cilicia, than the terror of present temptation depends on the natural history of the rattlesnake. And farther, being an American, he should have seen that the fact of the Christian world's having made a bishop of a speculating bacon-seller, and afterwards kept reverent record of this false St. George, but only obscure record of its real St. Georges, was by no means an isolated fact in the history of the Christian world,—but rather a part of its confirmed custom and "practical education";[2] and that, only the other day, St. James Fisk, canonised tearfully in America, and bestrewn with tuberoses and camellias, as above described (15, § 15), was a military gentleman of exactly the type of the Cilician St. George.

[1] [See *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 104 (Vol. XII. p. 131).]
[2] [See Letter 25, § 3 (p. 449).]

Farther. How did it never occur to Mr. Emerson that, whether his story of the book-collecting bishop were true or not, it was certainly not the story told to Cœur-de-Lion, or to Edward III. when they took St. George for their Master? No book-collecting episcopal person, had he been ever so much a saint, would have served *them* to swear by, or to strike by. They must have heard some other story;—not, perhaps, one written down, nor needing to be written. A remembered story,—yet, probably, a little truer than the written one; and a little older.

7. It is, above all, strange that the confusion of Mr. Emerson's own first sentence did not strike him, "George of Cappadocia, born in Cilicia." It is true that the bacon-selling and book-collecting Arian Bishop was born in Cilicia, and that this Arian Bishop was called George. But the Arians only contrived to get this Bishop of theirs thought of as a saint at all, because there was an antecedent St. George, with whom he might be confused; a St. George, indeed, "of Cappadocia"; and as it chanced that their own bishop came out of Cappadocia to his bishopric, very few years after his death sufficed to render the equivocation possible. But the real St. George had been martyred seventy years before, A.D. 290, whereas the Arian bishop was killed in 361. And *this* is the story of the real St. George, which filled the heart of the early Christian Church, and was heard by Cœur-de-Lion and by Edward III., somewhat in this following form, it, luckily for *us*, having been at least once fairly written out, in the tenth century, by the best Eastern scholar who occupied himself with the history of Saints.[1] I give you an old English translation of it, rather than my own, from p. 132 of the "Historie of that most famous Saint and Soldier of Christ Jesus, St. George of Cappadocia, asserted from the fictions of the Middle Ages of the Church, and opposition of the present, . . . by Peter Heylyn; printed in London for Henry Seyle, and to be

[1] [Symeon, surnamed Metaphrastes, of Byzantium.]

sold at his shop the signe of the Tyger's head, in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1631":—

8. "St. George was born in Cappadocia, of Christian parents, and those not of the meanest qualitie: by whom he was brought up in true Religion, and the feare of God. Hee was no sooner past his Childhood, but hee lost his father, bravely encountring with the enemies of Christ; and thereupon departed with his afflicted Mother into Palestine, whereof she was a native; and where great fortunes and a faire inheritance did fall unto him. Thus qualified in birth, and being also of an able bodie, and of an age fit for employment in the warres; hee was made a Colonell." (This word is explained above, 15, § 16.) "In which employment hee gave such testimonies of his valour, and behav'd himselfe so nobly; that forthwith Diocletian, not knowing yet that he was a Christian, advanc'd him to the place and dignitie of his Councell for the warres (for so on good authoritie I have made bold to render 'Comes' in this place and time).[1] About this time his Mother dyed: and hee, augmenting the heroicke resolutions of his mind, with the increase of his revenue, did presently applie himselfe unto the Court and service of his Prince; his twentieth yeere being even then compleat and ended. . . .

"But Diocletian being soon after compelled into his persecution of the Christians" (Heylyn here gives abstract of his author), "and warrants granted out unto the officers and rulers of the Provinces to speed the execution, and that done also in frequent senate, the Emperour there himself in person, St. George, though not yet sainted, could continue no longer, but there exposed himself unto their fury and his owne glory." (Translation begins again.)

"When therefore George, even in the first beginnings, had observ'd the extraordinarie cruelty of these proceedings, hee presently put off his military habiliments, and, making dole of all his substance to the poore, on the third

[1] [The brackets here are Heylyn's. Ruskin quotes from pp. 132, 135, 137, 138.]

Session of the Senate, when the Imperiall decree was to be verified, quite voide of feare, he came into the Senate-house, and spake unto them in this manner. 'How long, most noble Emperour and you Conscript Fathers, will you augment your tyrannies against the Christians? How long will you enact unjust and cruell Lawes against them, compelling those which are aright instructed in the faith, to follow that Religion, of whose truth your selves are doubtfull? Your Idols are no Gods, and I am bold to say againe, they are not. Be not you longer couzned in the same errour. Our Christ alone is God, He only is the Lord, in the glory of the Father. Eyther do you therefore acknowledge that Religion which undoubtedly is true: or else disturbe not them by your raging follies, which would willingly embrace it.' This said, and all the Senate wonderfully amazed at the free speech and boldnesse of the man" (and no wonder;—my own impression is indeed that most martyrs have been made away with less for their faith than their incivility. I have always a lurking sympathy with the Heathen); "they all of them turn'd their eyes upon the Emperour, expecting what hee would reply: who beckoning to Magnentius, then Consull, and one of his speciall Favourites, to returne an answere; hee presently applyed himselfe to satisfie his Prince's pleasure.

"Further" (says Heylyn) "we will not prosecute the storie in our Authors words, which are long and full of needlesse conference; but will briefly declare the substance of it, which is this. Upon St. George's constant profession of his Faith, they wooed him first with promises of future honours, and more faire advancements: but finding him unmoveable, not to be wrought upon with words, they tried him next with torments: not sparing anything which might expresse their cruelty, or enoble his affliction. When they saw all was fruitlesse, at last the fatall Sentence was pronounced against him in this manner: that, beeing had againe to prison, hee should the following day be drawne through the City and beheaded.

"Which sentence was accordingly performed, and George invested with the glorious Crowne of Martyrdome upon the 23. day of April, Anno Domini nostri 290."

9. That is St. George's "true" story, how far literally true is of no moment; it is enough for us that a young soldier, in early days of Christianity, put off his armour, and gave up his soul to his Captain, Christ:[1] and that his death did so impress the hearts of all Christian men who heard of it, that gradually he became to them the leader of a sacred soldiership, which conquers more than its mortal enemies, and prevails against the poison, and the shadow, of Pride, and Death.

And above all, his putting off his knight's armour, especially the military belt, as then taking service with Christ instead of the Roman Emperor, impressed the minds of the later Christian knights; because of the law referred to by St. Golden-Lips (quoted by Heylyn farther on):[2] "No one who is an officer would dare to appear without his zone and mantle before him who wears the diadem." So that having thus voluntarily humbled himself, he is thought of as chiefly exalted among Christian soldiers, and called, not only "the *great* Martyr," but the "Standard-Bearer" (Tropæophorus[3]). Whence he afterwards becomes the knight bearing the bloody cross on the argent field, and the Captain of Christian war.

10. The representation of all his spiritual enemies under the form of the Dragon was simply the natural habit of the Greek mind: the stories of Apollo delivering Latona from the Python, and of Perseus delivering Andromeda from the sea monster, had been as familiar as the pitcher and winecups they had been painted on, in red and black, for a thousand years before: and the name of St. George,[4]

[1] [*King Richard II.*, Act iv. sc. 1 ("gave . . . his pure soul unto his Captain, Christ": see Letter 25, § 15, p. 459).]

[2] [Chrysostom; Heylyn (p. 148) quotes from his 26th Homily on Corinthians.]

[3] [Compare "The Place of Dragons," Vol. XXIV. pp. 375 *seq.*, where Mr. Anderson works out the Greek analogies with the story of St. George.]

[4] [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 116 (Vol. XX. p. 108).]

the "Earthworker," or "Husbandman," * connected him instantly, in Greek thoughts, not only with the ancient dragon, Erichthonius, but with the Spirit of agriculture, called "Thrice-warrior," to whom the dragon was a harnessed creature of toil.[1] Yet, so far as I know, it was not until the more strictly Christian tradition of the armed archangel Michael confused its symbolism with that of the armed saint, that the dragon enters definitely into the story of St. George. The authoritative course of Byzantine painting, sanctioned and restricted by the Church in the treatment of every subject, invariably represents St. George as the soldier Martyr, or witness,[2] before Diocletian, never as victor over the dragon: † his story, as the painters tell it, corresponds closely with that of St. Catherine of Sinai; ‡ and is, in the root of it, truth, and in

* More properly "named from the husbandman." Thus Lycus is "a wolf," Lycius, named from the "wolf," or "wolfish." So, Georgus is "a husbandman," Georgius, "named from the husbandman," or "husbandmanship."

† See the complete series of subjects as given by M. Didron [3] in his *Iconographie Chrétienne* (8vo, Paris, 1845, p. 369), and note the most interesting trace of the idea of Triptolemus, in the attendant child with the water-pitcher behind the equestrian figures of the Saint.

‡ You will find that in my 19th letter, § 10 [p. 328], I propose that our St. George's Company in England shall be under the patronage also of St. Anthony in Italy. And in general, we will hold ourselves bound to reverence, in one mind, with Carpaccio and the good Painters and Merchants of Venice, the eight great Saints of the Greek Church,—namely (in the order M. Didron gives them)—the Archangel Michael, the Precursor (John Baptist), St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Nicholas, St. George, Ste. Catherine of Sinai, and St. Anthony, these being patrons of our chief occupations [4] (while, over our banking operations we will have for patron or principal manager, the more modern Western Saint, Francis of Assisi); meaning always no disrespect to St. Jerome or Ste. Cecilia, in case we need help in our literature or music.

[1] [See the woodcut of "Triptolemus in his Car," Plate V. in Vol. XX. (p. 243).]

[2] [Compare Letter 82, § 29 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 249).]

[3] [That is, in the treatise by the Byzantine Monk Dionysius, translated by Paul Durand, and furnished with an introduction by M. Didron; the title of the translation, etc., being *Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne*. The order of the Saints is given in pp. 352–378. For other references to the book, see Vol. XIX. p. 355 *n.*]

[4] [That is, warfare against evil (St. Michael); "washing with pure water" (the Baptist. see Letter 73, § 14; Vol. XXIX. p. 23); fishing (St. Peter: see Vol. XXVIII. p. 34); the practice of works and charity (St. Paul: see below, p. 509); sea-faring (St. Nicholas); husbandry (St. George and St. Anthony: see p. 328); and the arts and sciences (St. Catherine). For St. Catherine, called "of Sinai," see above, p. 206 *n.* For a list of St. George's occupations generally, see Letter 93, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 473).]

the branching of it, beautiful dream, of the same wild and lovely character. And we might as well confuse Catherine of Sinai with Catherine of Siena (or for that matter, Catherine de Medicis!) as St. George of the Eastern Church with George the Arian. And this witness of painting remains simple and unbroken, down to the last days of Venice. St. Mark, St Nicholas, and St. George are the three saints who are seen, in the vision of the Fisherman, delivering Venice from the fiends.[1] St. George, first "of the seaweed," has three other churches besides in Venice; and it will be the best work I have ever done in this broken life of mine, if I can some day show you, however dimly, how Victor Carpaccio has painted him in the humblest of these,—the little chapel of St. George on the "Shore of the Slaves."[2] There, however, our dragon does not fail us, both Carpaccio and Tintoret having the deepest convictions on that subject;—as all strong men *must* have; for the Dragon is too true a creature, to all such, spiritually. That it is an indisputably living and venomous creature, materially, has been the marvel of the world, innocent and guilty, not knowing what to think of the terrible worm; nor whether to worship it, as the Rod of their lawgiver, or to abhor it as the visible symbol of the everlasting Disobedience.

11. Touching which mystery, you must learn one or two main facts.[3]

The word "Dragon" means "the Seeing Creature," and I believe the Greeks had the same notion in their other word for a serpent, "ophis."[4] There were many other creeping, and crawling, and rampant things; the olive stem and the ivy were serpentine enough, blindly; but here was a creeping thing that *saw!*

[1] [See Vol. X. p. 76.]

[2] [For S. Giorgio in Alga, see Vol. X. p. 4, and Vol. XXIV. p. xliii. The other churches are S. Giorgio Maggiore, S. Giorgio de' Greci, and S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni; the pictures in the last was the subject of ch. x. in *St. Mark's Rest*, Vol. XXIV. pp. 335 *seq.*]

[3] [Compare *Queen of the Air*, Vol. XIX. pp. 361 *seq.*]

[4] [Here compare *Deucalion*, vol. ii. ch. i. § 8 (Vol. XXVI. p. 301).]

The action of the cobra, with its lifted and levelled head, and the watchfulness of the coiled viper, impressed the Egyptians and Greeks intensely. To the Egyptian the serpent was awful and sacred, and became the ornament on the front of the King's diadems[1] (though an evil spirit also, when not *erect*). The Greeks never could make up their minds about it. All human life seems to them as the story of Laocoon.[2] The fiery serpents slay us for our wisdom and fidelity;—then writhe themselves into rest at the feet of the Gods.

12. The Egyptians were at the same pause as to their Nile Dragon, for whom I told you they built their labyrinth.[3]

"For in the eyes of some of the Egyptians, the crocodiles are sacred; but by others they are held for enemies. And it is they who dwell by the Lake Mœris, who think them greatly sacred. Every one of these lake people has care of his own crocodile, taught to be obedient to the lifting of finger. And they put jewels of enamel and gold into their ears, and bracelets on their forefeet, and feed them with the sacred shew-bread daily, and attend upon them, that they may live beautiful lives; and, when they die, bury them, embalmed, in holy tombs." (Thus religion, as a pious friend, I observe, writes in a Devonshire paper the other day, leads to the love of Nature!) "But they of the city Elephantine eat their crocodiles, holding them nowise sacred. Neither do they call them crocodiles, but 'champsæ'; it is the Ionians who call them 'crocodiles,' because they think them like the little crocodiles that live in the dry stone walls."[4]

13. I do not know if children generally have strong associative fancy about words; but when I was a child, that word "Crocodile" always seemed to me very terrific, and I would even hastily, in any book, turn a leaf in which it was printed with a capital C. If anybody had but told me the meaning of it—"a creature that is afraid of crocuses!"[5]

[1] [Compare Letter 75, § 12 (Vol. XXIX. p. 69), and *Proserpina*, i. ch. xii. § 2 (Vol. XXV. p. 363).]

[2] [For the Laocoon, see Vol. IV. pp. 120–121.]

[3] [See Letter 23, § 13 (p. 407).]

[4] [Herodotus, ii. 69.]

[5] [See the account of the word in Gaisford's *Etymologicum Magnum* . . . *ex pluribus Scholiastis et grammaticis:* "the land crocodile fears the crocus; whence bee-keepers, when the animal comes up to eat their honey, put out crocuses, at the sight of which the crocodile flees."]

That, at least, is all I can make of it, now; though I can't understand how this weakness of the lizard mind was ever discovered, for lizards never *see* crocuses, that I know of. The next I meet in Italy (poor little, glancing, panting things,—I miss them a little here from my mossy walls) —shall be shown an artificial crocus, Paris-made; we will see what it thinks of it! But however it came to be given, for the great Spirit-Lizard, the name is a good one. For as the wise German's final definition of the Devil (in the second part of *Faust*) is that he is afraid of Roses,[1] so the earliest and simplest possible definition of him is that in spring-time he is afraid of crocuses; which I am quite sure, both our farmers and manufacturers are now, in England, to the utmost. On the contrary, the Athenian Spirit of Wisdom was so fond of crocuses that she made her own robe crocus-colour, before embroidering it with the wars of the Giants;[2] she being greatly antagonistic to the temper which dresses sisters of charity in black, for a crocus-colour dress was much the gayest—not to say the giddiest—thing she could possibly wear in Athens.

14. And of the crocus, vernal, and autumnal, more properly the enchanted herb of Colchis[3] (see by the way, White's *History of Selborne* at the end of its 41st letter[4]), I must tell you somewhat more in next letter;[5] meantime, look at the saffron crest in the centre of it, carefully, and read, with some sympathy, if you can, this true story of a crocus, which being told me the other day by one who, whether I call him friend or not, is indeed friendly to me,

[1] [Compare Letter 46, § 15 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 182–183); and see Vol. XIII. p. 520 *n.*]

[2] [For the crocus-colour of the robe, see *Laws of Fésole*, ch. vii. § 26 (Vol. XV. p. 427), and compare Vol. XIX. p. 375; for its embroidery with the wars of the giants, compare Vol. XXIII. p. 275.]

[3] [The name for the meadow-saffron—κολχικόν—having reference to the enchantments of Medea of Colchis.]

[4] [Letter 83 in Bohn's edition. "The vernal crocus expands its flowers by the beginning of March at farthest, and often in very rigorous weather; and cannot be retarded but by some violence offered; while the autumnal (the saffron) defies the influence of the spring and summer, and will not blow till most plants begin to fade and run to seed. This circumstance is one of the wonders of the creation."]

[5] [This, however, was not done.]

and to all whom he can befriend, I begged him to write it for your sakes, which he has thus graciously done,[1]—

"A STORY OF A FLOWER

"It is impossible to describe the delight which I took in my first flower, yet it was only a poor peeky little sprouting crocus. Before I begin the story, I must, in two lines, make known my needy state at the time when I became the owner of the flower. I was in my eleventh year, meanly clothed, plainly fed, and penniless; an errand boy in receipt of one shilling and sixpence a week, which sum I consumed in bread and shoe leather. Yet I was happy enough, living in a snug cottage in the suburbs of Oxford, within sight of its towers, and within hearing of its bells. In the back

[1] [Henry Merritt (1822–1877), picture-cleaner and art critic, author of *Dirt and Pictures Separated*, *Robert Dalby*, and other works, which were collected by his widow (the artist, Anna Lea Merritt) in 1879 under the title *Henry Merritt: Art Criticism and Romance* (Kegan Paul & Co., 2 vols.). "His generosity was amazing. Not only did he give to those whom he cared for, but to some whom he despised, to one at least who had grossly injured him. No man perhaps ever won more sincere respect and affection from those who came to him as employees and remained as friends, enjoying the originality of his conversation, and the simple nobility of his character": see the "Recollections" prefixed to his Remains, where the two following letters from Ruskin are given (pp. 42, 43):—

"CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
"*December* 1, 1872.

"MY DEAR MERRITT,—When I got your story of a flower I put it aside for a quiet day when I should not be tired. It has refreshed me this morning, being somewhat ill, and not able to see anything golden anywhere but through your young eyes. It is very beautiful. Might I use it for my February *Fors*?

"Had you been a little less gently made you would have been a great painter. The world has crumbled you in its fingers, or, rather, used you as soft earth for its own purposes, but you have made many a seeming dead crocus bloom again.

"Ever affectionately yours,
"J. RUSKIN."

"BRANTWOOD, *January* 19, 1875.

"MY DEAR MERRITT,—I will be sure to give you due alarm concerning the old masters. You have given great pleasure to Carlyle by your report, and you always give much to *me* whenever you write to me. I have no other friend who says such pretty things to me, in a way that reminds me of the little courtesies of old days, when people were graceful by kind act in a letter as much as in a quadrille, and when flattery was the naughtiest of one's faults to one's friends, never carelessness.

"Ever affectionately yours,
"J. RUSKIN."

"A Story of a Flower" was reprinted in the same volume, vol. i. pp. 269–272.]

yard of my home were many wonders. The gable end of a barn was mantled with ivy, centuries old, and sparrows made their home in its leafage; an ancient wall, old as the Norman tower at the other end of the town, was rich in gilly-flowers; a wooden shed, with red tiles, was covered by a thriving 'tea tree,' so we called it, which in summer was all blossom, pendant mauve-coloured blossoms. This tree managed to interlace its branches among the tiles so effectively as in the end to lift off the whole roof in a mass, and poise it in the air. Bees came in swarms to sip honey at the blossoms: I noted civilised hive bees, and large ones whose waxen cells were hidden in mossy banks in the woods—these had crimson and saffron tinted bodies, or, for variety, hairy shapes of sombre green and black. I was never weary of my wall-flowers, and bees, and butterflies. But, so it is, I happened one day to get a glimpse of a college garden about the end of February, or the beginning of March, when its mound of venerable elms was lit up with star-like yellow flowers. The dark earth was robed as with a bright garment of imperial, oriental splendour. It was the star-shaped aconite, as I believe, but am not sure, whose existence in flower is brief, but glorious, when beheld, as I beheld it, in masses. Henceforth, if Old Fidget, the gardener, was not at the back gate of St. J——, I peeped through the keyhole at my yellow garden bed, which seemed flooded with sunlight, only broken by patches of rich black earth, which formed strange patterns, such as we see on Japanese screens of lacquer and bronze, only that the flowers had a glory of their own. Well, I looked through the keyhole every time I passed, and that was four times daily, and always with increased interest for my flowering aconite. But oh! trouble upon trouble, one day I found the keyhole stopt, and there was an end to my daily joy, and of the interest which had been awakened in me, in a new way, for the wonders of nature. My love of flowers, however, increased, and I found means to feed my love. I had often observed Old Fidget, the head gardener, and his mates, bring out wheelbarrow loads of refuse from the shrubbery and flower beds and throw them in a heap along the garden wall without, where a long deep trench had become the well-known receptacle for rubbish. Such places were common in town suburbs in those days. The rubbish consisted of cuttings of shrubs and plants, and rakings of flower-borders, but more beautifully, of elm leaves, and the cast-off clothing of chestnut trees, which soon lay rotting in flaky masses, until I happened to espy a fragment of a bulb, and then, the rubbish of the garden, which concealed sprouting chestnuts, knew no rest. I went, one holiday, and dug deep, with no other implement than my hands, into this matted mass. I laboured, till at length, in a mass of closely pressed leaves, I came upon a perfect crocus. It lay like a dead elfin infant in its forest grave. I was enchanted, and afraid to touch it, as one would fear to commit a piece of sacrilege. It lay in its green robes, which seemed spun from dainty silken threads unsoiled by mortal hands. Its blossom of pale flesh tint lay concealed within a creamy opalescent film, which seemed to revive and live when the light penetrated the darksome tomb, contrasting with the emerald robes, and silken, pliant roots. At length I lifted the flower from its bed, and carried it to my garden plot with breathless care. My garden plot, not much larger than a large baking-dish, was enclosed by broken tiles, a scrubby place, unsuited to my newly

discovered treasure. I broke up the earth and pulverised it with my fingers, but its coarseness was incurable. I abandoned it as I thought of some mole hills in a neighbouring copse, and soon my plot was filled deeply with soft sandy soil, fit for my flower. And then came the necessity of protecting it from the searching March winds, which I did effectually by covering it with a flower-pot, and the season wore on, and soft, mild days set in apace, and my flower, which was ever uppermost in my thoughts, whether sleeping or waking, began to show signs of life, as day by day I permitted the sun to look at it, until at length, one sunny, silent, Sunday morning, it opened its glowing, golden, sacramental cup, gleaming like light from heaven—dropt in a dark place, living light and fire. So it seemed to my poor vision, and I called the household and the neighbours from their cares to share my rapture. But alas! my dream was ended; the flower had no fascination for those who came at my call. It was but a yellow crocus to them—some laughed, some tittered, some jeered me, and old Dick Willis, poor man, who got a crust by selling soft water by the pail, he only rubbed his dim eyes, and exclaimed in pity, 'God bless the poor boy!'"

Little thinking how much he was already blessed,—he —and his flower!

For indeed Crocus and Carduus[1] are alike Benedict flowers, if only one knew God's gold and purple from the Devil's, which, with St. George's help, and St. Anthony's, —the one well knowing the flowers of the field, and the other those of the desert,—we will try somewhat to discern.

[1] [The wild thistle.]

## LETTER 27

### CHRIST'S LODGINGS[1]

BRANTWOOD, *27th January*, 1873.

1. "IF it were not so, I would have told you."[2]

I read those strange words of St. John's Gospel this morning, for at least the thousandth time; and for the first time, that I remember, with any attention. It is difficult, if not impossible, to attend rightly without some definite motive, or chance-help, to words which one has read and re-read till every one of them slips into its place unnoticed, as a familiar guest,—unchallenged as a household friend. But the Third Fors helped me, to-day, by half effacing the "n" in the word Mona, in the tenth-century MS. I was deciphering; and making me look at the word, till I began to think of it, and wondered. You may as well learn the old meaning of that pretty name of the isle of Anglesea. "In my Father's house," says Christ, "are many monas,"—remaining-places—"if it were not so, I would have told you."[2]

Alas, had He but told us more clearly that it *was* so!

I have the profoundest sympathy with St. Thomas, and would fain put all his questions over again, and twice as many more. "We know not whither Thou goest."[3] That Father's house,—where is it? These "remaining-places," how are they to be prepared for us?—how are we to be prepared for them?

[1] ["Servants' Lodgings" was a rejected title for this letter.]
[2] [John xiv. 2: *μοναὶ πολλαί*.]
[3] [John xiv. 5.]

2. If ever your clergy mean really to help you to read your Bible,—the whole of it, and not merely the bits which tell you that you are miserable sinners, and that you needn't mind,—they must make a translation retaining as many as possible of the words in their Greek form, which you may easily learn, and yet which will be quit of the danger of becoming debased by any vulgar English use. So also, the same word must always be given when it *is* the same;[1] and not in one place translated "mansion," and in another "abode." (Compare verse 23 of this same chapter.*) Not but that "mansion" is a very fine Latin word, and perfectly correct, (if only one knows Latin), but I doubt not that most parish children understand by it, if anything, a splendid house with two wings, and an acre or two of offices, in the middle of a celestial park; and suppose that some day or other they are all of them to live in such, as well as the Squire's children; whereas, if either "mona" or "remaining" were put in both verses, it is just possible that sometimes both the Squire and the children, instead of vaguely hoping to be lodged some day in heaven by Christ and His Father, might take notice of their offer in the last verse I have quoted, and get ready a spare room both in the mansion and cottage, to offer Christ and His Father immediately, if they liked to come into lodgings on earth.[2]

3. I was looking over some of my own children's books the other day, in the course of re-arranging the waifs and strays of Denmark Hill at Brantwood; and came upon a catechism of a very solemn character on the subject of the

* "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Our mona,—as in the 2nd verse (John xiv.).

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[1] [Compare Letter 12, § 5 (p. 202).]

[2] [See *The Crown of Wild Olive*, § 26 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 406, 407), where Ruskin refers to this Letter in a footnote of 1873.]

County of Kent.[1] It opens by demanding "the situation of Kent"; then, the extent of Kent,—the population of Kent, and a sketch of the history of Kent; in which I notice with interest that hops were first grown in Kent in 1524, and petitioned against as a wicked weed in 1528. Then, taking up the subject in detail, inquiry is made as to "the situation of Dover?" To which the orthodox reply is that Dover is pleasantly situated on that part of the island of Great Britain nearest the Continent, and stands in a valley between stupendous hills. To the next question, "What is the present state of Dover?" the well-instructed infant must answer, "That Dover consists of two parts, the upper, called the Town, and the lower, the Pier; and that they are connected by a long narrow street, which, from the rocks that hang over it, and seem to threaten the passenger with destruction, has received the name of Snaregate Street." The catechism next tests the views of the young respondent upon the municipal government of Dover, the commercial position of Dover, and the names of the eminent men whom Dover has produced; and at last, after giving a proper account of the Castle of Dover and the two churches in Dover, we are required to state whether there is not an interesting relic of antiquity in the vicinity of Dover; upon which, we observe that, about two miles north-west from Dover, are the remains of St. Radagune's Abbey, now converted into a farm-house;[2] and finally, to the crucial interrogation—"What nobleman's seat is near Dover?" we reply, with more than usual unction, that "In the Parish of Waldershaw, five miles and a half from Dover, is Waldershaw Park, the elegant seat of the Earl of Guildford, and that the house is a magnificent structure,

[1] [*Pinnock's County Histories. The History and Topography of the County of Kent, with Biographical Sketches, etc., etc., and a Neat Map of the County.* London: Printed for Pinnock and Maunder. Ruskin quotes from pp. 1, 17 *n.*, 10, 15.]

[2] [St. Radigund's Abbey was founded in 1191; the chapel and some domestic buildings, considerably altered in the sixteenth century, still remain in use as a farmhouse. For the legend of the queen and saint, Radigund (or Radegunda), the patroness of the Trinitarian Order, see Mrs. Jameson's *Legends of the Monastic Orders*, p. 220.]

situated in a vale, in the centre of a well-wooded Park." Whereat I stopped reading; first, because St. Radagune's Abbey, though it is nothing but walls with a few holes through them by which the cows get in for shelter on windy days, was the first "remaining" of Antiquity I ever sketched, when a boy of fourteen, spending half my best BB pencil on the ivy and the holes in the walls; and, secondly, the tone of these two connected questions in the catechism marks exactly the curious period in the English mind when the worship of St. Radagune was indeed utterly extinct, so that *her* once elegant mansion becomes a farm-house, as in that guise fulfilling its now legitimate function:—but the worship of Earls of Guildford is still so flourishing that no idea would ever occur to the framers of catechism that the elegant seats of these also were on the way to become farm-houses.

Which is nevertheless surely the fact:—and the only real question is whether St. Radagune's mansion and the Earl of Guildford's are both to be farm-houses, or whether the state of things at the time of the Dover Catechism may not be exactly reversed,—and St. Radagune have her mansion and park railed in again, while the Earl's walls shelter the cows on windy days. For indeed, from the midst of the tumult and distress of nations, fallen wholly Godless and lordless, perhaps the first possibility of redemption may be by cloistered companies, vowed once more to the service of a divine Master, and to the reverence of His saints.

4. You were shocked, I suppose, by my catalogue, in last *Fors*, of such persons, as to be revered by our own Company.[1] But have you ever seriously considered what a really vital question it is to you whether St. Paul and St. Pancras (not that I know myself at this moment, who St. Pancras was,—but I'll find out for next *Fors*[2]),—St. George and St. Giles, St. Bridget and St. Helen, are really only to become

[1] [See Letter 26, § 10 *n.* (p. 482).]
[2] [See Letter 32, § 26 (p. 603).]

the sponsors of City parishes, or whether you mean still to render them any gratitude as the first teachers of what used to be called civilization; nay, whether there may not even be, irrespective of what we *now* call civilization—namely, coals and meat at famine prices,[1]—some manner of holy living and dying, of lifting holy hands without wrath,[2] and sinking to blessed sleep without fear, of which these persons, however vaguely remembered, have yet been the best patterns the world has shown us.

Don't think that I want to make Roman Catholics of you, or to make anything of you, except honest people. But as for the vulgar and insolent Evangelical[3] notion, that one should not care for the Saints,—nor pray to them,[4]—Mercy on us!—do the poor wretches fancy that God wouldn't be thankful if they would pray to *any*body, for what it was right they should have; or that *He* is piqued, forsooth, if one thinks His servants can help us sometimes, in our paltry needs?

"But they are dead, and cannot help us, nor hear!"

Alas; perchance—no. What would I not give to be so much a heretic as to believe the Dead *could* hear!—but are there no living Saints, then, who can help you? Sir C. Dilke, or Mr. Beales, for instance?[5] and if you don't believe there are any parks or monas abiding for you in heaven, may you not pull down some park railings here and—hold public meetings in them, of a Paradisiacal character?

5. Indeed, that pulling down of the Piccadilly railings was a significant business. "Park," if you will look to your Johnson, you will find is one of quite the oldest words in Europe; *vox antiquissima*,[6] a most ancient word, and now a familiar one among active nations. French, Parc, Welsh,

[1] [See Letter 22, § 7 (p. 376).]

[2] [1 Timothy ii. 8: see above, p. 467.]

[3] [Compare below, p. 546.]

[4] [See the letter to Miss Anderson in Vol. XXIV. p. xxiv.]

[5] [For Sir Charles Dilke's "republican" agitation at this time, see above, p. 233 *n*. Mr. Beales was president of the Reform League at the time of the pulling down of the Park railings, for which see Vol. XVII. pp. lxxx., 326, and compare Letters 2, § 10 (above, p. 36), and 74, § 15 (Vol. XXIX. p. 45).]

[6] [Quoted, as is also the definition from John Manwood's *A Brefe Collection of the Lawes of the Forest* (1592), from Todd's edition of Johnson.]

—we *may* master that, and pay our compliments to God upon it? We will hope so; in the meantime I can assure you, this creation of His will bear more looking at than you have given, yet, however addicted you may be to the contemplation of Nature (though I suspect you are more addicted to the tasting of her[1]); and that if instead of being in such a hurry to pull park railings down, you would only beg the owners to put them to their proper use, and let the birds and beasts, which were made to breathe English air as well as you, take shelter there, you would soon have a series of National Museums more curious than that in Great Russell Street;[2] and with something better worth looking at in them than the sacred crocodiles. Besides, you might spare the poor beasts a little room on earth, for charity, if not for curiosity. *They* have no mansions preparing for them elsewhere.

What! you answer; indignant,—"All that good land given up to beasts!" Have you ever looked how much or little of England *is* in park land? I have here, by me, Hall's Travelling Atlas of the English Counties;[3] which paints conveniently in red the railroads, and in green the parks (not conscious, probably—the colourist—of his true expression of antagonism by those colours).

The parks lie on the face of each county like a few crumbs on a plate; if you could turn them all at once into corn land, it would literally not give you a mouthful extra of dinner. Your dog, or cat, is more costly to you, in proportion to your private means, than all these kingdoms of beasts would be to the nation.

"Cost what they might, it would be too much"—think you? You will not give those acres of good land to keep beasts?

[1] [Ruskin notes here in his copy, "Obscure. I think there must have been a misprint somewhere." The passage seems, however, clearly to refer to the following page, where he describes the crops grown for beer.]

[2] [The Natural History Collections had not yet removed from Bloomsbury.]

[3] [*A Travelling County Atlas: with all the Coach and Rail Roads accurately laid down and coloured, and carefully corrected to the present time.* Engraved by Sidney Hall, 1845.]

9. Perhaps not beasts of God's making; but how many acres of good land do you suppose, then, you *do* give up, as it is, to keep beasts He never made,—never meant to be made,—the beasts you make of yourselves?

Do you know how much corn land in the United Kingdom is occupied in supplying you with the means of getting drunk?

Mind, I am no temperance man.[1] You should all have as much beer and alcohol as was good for you if I had my way. But the beer and alcohol which are *not* good for you,—which are the ruin of so many of you, suppose you could keep the wages you spend in that liquor in the savings bank, and left the land, now tilled to grow it for you, to natural and sober beasts?—Do you think it would be false economy?—Why, you might have a working men's park for nothing, in every county, bigger than the Queen's! and your own homes all the more comfortable.

10. I had no notion myself, till the other day, what the facts were, in this matter. Get, if you can, Professor Kirk's *Social Politics*[2] (Hamilton, Adams, and Co.), and read, for a beginning, his 21st chapter, on land and liquor; and then, as you have leisure, all the book, carefully. Not that he would help me out with my park plan; he writes with the simple idea that the one end of humanity is to eat and drink; and it is interesting to see a Scotch Professor thinking the lakes of his country were made to be "Reservoirs," and particularly instancing the satisfaction of thirsty Glasgow out of Loch Katrine; so that, henceforth, it will be proper in Scotch economical circles not to speak of the Lady of the Lake, but of the Lady of the Reservoir. Still, assuming that to eat and

[1] [The "temperance" movement at this time was, it should be remembered, largely identified with proposals for the total abolition of the liquor trade.]

[2] [*Social Politics in Great Britain and Ireland*, by Professor J. Kirk, Edinburgh, 1870. On p. 48 he says: "Such is the value of that water which is now flowing from our great lake reservoirs." The Glasgow Waterworks, by means of which 70,000,000 gallons of water are daily conveyed to Glasgow by tunnels or aqueducts, were partially opened by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1859.]

drink *is* the end of life, the Professor shows you clearly how much better this end may be accomplished than it is now. And the broad fact which he brings out concerning your drink is this; that about one million five hundred thousand acres of land in the United Kingdom are occupied in producing strong liquor (and I don't see that he has included in this estimate what is under the wicked weeds of Kent;[1] it is curious what difficulty people always seem to have in putting anything accurately into short statement). The produce of this land, which is more than all the arable for bread in Scotland, after being manufactured into drink, is sold to you at the rates,—the spirits, of twenty-seven shillings and sixpence for two shillings' worth; and the beer, of two shillings for threepence-halfpenny worth. The sum you spend in these articles, and in tobacco, annually, is ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIX MILLIONS OF POUNDS; on which the pure profit of the richer classes (putting the lower alehouse gains aside) is, roughly, a hundred millions.[2] That is the way the rich Christian Englishman provides against the Day of Judgment, expecting to hear his Master say to him, "I was thirsty—and ye gave me drink[3]—Two shillings' worth for twenty-seven and sixpence."

11. Again; for the matter of lodging. Look at the Professor's page 73. There you find that in the street dedicated in Edinburgh to the memory of the first Bishop of Jerusalem, in No. 23, there are living 220 persons. In the first floor of it live ten families,—forty-nine persons; in the second floor, nine families—fifty-four persons; and so on, up to six floors, the ground-floor being a shop; so that "the whole 220 persons in the building are without one foot of the actual surface of the land on which to exist."[4]

[1] [Hope: see above, § 3. Compare *Proserpina*, i. ch. vi. § 5 *n.* (Vol. XXV. p. 284).]

[2] [Compare Letter 67, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 644), and Letters 73 and 84 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 22, 290).]

[3] [Matthew xxv. 35.]

[4] [For another notice of tenements in Edinburgh, see Letter 40, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 73); and compare Letters 73, § 3, and 90, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 15, 432).]

"In my Father's house," says Christ, "are many mansions."[1] Verily, that appears to be also the case in some of His Scotch Evangelical servants' houses here. And verecund Mr. McCosh, who will not venture to suggest any better arrangement of the heavens,[2]—has he likewise no suggestion to offer as to the arrangement of No. 28, St. James's Street?

12. "Whose fault is it?" do you ask?

Immediately, the fault of the landlords; but the landlords, from highest to lowest, are more or less thoughtless and ignorant persons, from whom you can expect no better. The persons really answerable for all this are your two professed bodies of teachers; namely, the writers for the public press, and the clergy.

Nearly everything that I ever did of any use in this world has been done contrary to the advice of my friends; and as my friends are unanimous at present in begging me never to write to newspapers,[3] I am somewhat under the impression that I ought to resign my Oxford professorship, and try to get a sub-editorship in the *Telegraph*. However, for the present, I content myself with my own work, and have sustained patiently, for thirty years, the steady opposition of the public press to whatever good was in it (said *Telegraph* always with thanks excepted[4]), down to the article in the *Spectator* of August 18th, 1870, which, on my endeavour to make the study of art, and of Greek literature, of some avail in Oxford to the confirmation of right principle in the minds of her youth, instantly declared that "the artistic perception and skill of Greece were nourished by the very lowness of her ethical code, by her lack of high aims, by her freedom from all aspirations after moral good, by her inability even to conceive a Hebrew tone of

[1] [See above, p. 489.]

[2] [See above, § 7.]

[3] [The remonstrances were suggested presumably by Ruskin's letters to the *Pall Mall Gazette* in January 1873 on "How the Rich Spend their Money": see Vol. XVII. pp. 553–555.]

[4] [Compare Letter 22, § 8 (p. 377 *n.*).]

purity, by the fact that she lived without God, and died without hope."[1]

"High aims" are explained by the *Spectator*, in another place, to consist in zeal for the establishment of cotton mills. And the main body of the writers for the public press are also—not of that opinion—for they have no opinions; but they get their living by asserting so much to you.

18. Against which testimony of theirs, you shall hear, to-day, the real opinion of a man of whom Scotland once was proud; the man who first led her to take some notice of that same reservoir of hers,[2] which Glasgow,—Clyde not being deep enough for her drinking, or perhaps (see above, 16, § 12) not being now so sweet as stolen waters,—cools her tormented tongue with:—

"The poor laws into which you have ventured for the love of the country, form a sad quagmire. They are like John Bunyan's Slough of Despond, into which, as he observes, millions of cart-loads of good resolutions have been thrown, without perceptibly mending the way. From what you say, and from what I have heard from others, there is a very natural desire to trust to one or two empirical remedies, such as general systems of education, and so forth. But a man with a broken constitution might as well put faith in Spilsburg or Godbold. It is not the knowledge, but the use which is made of it, that is productive of real benefit.

"There is a terrible evil in England to which we are strangers" (some slight acquaintance has been raked up since, Sir Walter), "the number, to wit, of tippling houses, where the labourer, as a matter of course, spends the overplus of his earnings. In Scotland there are few; and the Justices are commendably inexorable in rejecting all application for licences where there appears no public necessity for granting them. A man, therefore, cannot easily spend much money in liquor, since he must walk three or

[1] [From a Second Notice of *Lectures on Art*. "Another place" was the First Notice of the same book, in the preceding number, August 6, 1870; compare Vol. XX. pp. 296–297, and above, Letter 7, § 14, p. 128.]

[2] [After the publication of *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), "the whole country rang with the praises of the poet; crowds set off to view the scenery of Loch Katrine, till then comparatively unknown; and as the book came out just before the season for excursions, every house and inn in that neighbourhood was crammed with a constant succession of visitors. It is a well-ascertained fact that from the date of the publication of *The Lady of the Lake* the posthorse duty in Scotland rose in an extraordinary degree, and indeed it continued to do so regularly" (Robert Cadell, in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. ii. p. 292).]

four miles to the place of suction, and back again, which infers a sort of malice prepense of which few are capable; and the habitual opportunity of indulgence not being at hand, the habits of intemperance, and of waste connected with it, are not acquired. If financiers would admit a general limitation of the alehouses over England to one-fourth of the number, I am convinced you would find the money spent in that manner would remain with the peasant, as a source of self-support and independence. All this applies chiefly to the country; in towns, and in the manufacturing districts, the evil could hardly be diminished by such regulations. There would, perhaps, be no means so effectual as that (which will never be listened to) of taxing the manufacturers according to the number of hands which they employ on an average, and applying the produce in maintaining the manufacturing poor. If it should be alleged that this would injure the manufacturers, I would boldly reply,—'And why not injure, or rather limit, speculations, the excessive stretch of which has been productive of so much damage to the principles of the country, and to the population, whom it has, in so many respects, degraded and demoralized?' For a great many years, manufacturers, taken in a general point of view, have not partaken of the character of a regular profession, in which all who engaged with honest industry and a sufficient capital might reasonably expect returns proportional to their advances and labour,—but have, on the contrary, rather resembled a lottery, in which the great majority of the adventurers are sure to be losers, although some may draw considerable advantage. Men continued for a great many years to exert themselves, and to pay extravagant wages, not in hopes that there could be a reasonable prospect of an orderly and regular demand for the goods they wrought up, but in order that they might be the first to take advantage of some casual opening which might consume their cargo, let others shift as they could. Hence extravagant wages on some occasions; for these adventurers who thus played at hit or miss, stood on no scruples while the chance of success remained open. Hence also, the stoppage of work, and the discharge of the workmen, when the speculators failed of their object. All this while the country was the sufferer;—*for whoever gained, the result, being upon the whole a loss, fell on the nation*, together with the task of maintaining a poor, rendered effeminate and vicious by over-wages and over-living, and necessarily cast loose upon society. I cannot but think that the necessity of making some fund beforehand, for the provision of those whom they debauch, and render only fit for the almshouse, in prosecution of their own adventures, though it operated as a check on the increase of manufacturers, would be a measure just in itself, and beneficial to the community. But it would never be listened to;—the weaver's beam, and the sons of Zeruiah, would be too many for the proposers.

"This is the eleventh of August; Walter, happier than he will ever be again, perhaps, is preparing for the moors. He has a better dog than Trout, and rather less active. Mrs. Scott and all our family send kind love. Yours ever. W. S."[1]

[1] [Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. iv. pp. 84–87 (letter of August 11, 1817, to Mr. Morritt). For another reference to the passage, see Letter 73, § 13 (Vol. XXIX. p. 23).]

14. I have italicized one sentence in this letter, written in the year 1817 (what would the writer have thought of the state of things now?)—though I should like, for that matter, to italicize it all. But that sentence touches the root of the evil which I have most at heart, in these letters, to show you; namely, the increasing poverty of the *country* through the enriching of a few. I told you, in the first sentence of them, that the English *people* was not a rich people; that it "was empty in purse—empty in stomach."[1] The day before yesterday, a friend, who thinks my goose pie[2] not an economical dish! sent me a penny cookery book, a very desirable publication, which I instantly sat down to examine. It starts with the great principle that you must never any more roast your meat, but always stew it; and never have an open fire, but substitute, for the open fire, close stoves, all over England.[3]

Now observe. There was once a dish, thought peculiarly English—Roast Beef. And once a place, thought peculiarly English—the Fireside. These two possessions are now too costly for you. Your England, in her unexampled prosperity, according to the *Morning Post*,[4] can no longer afford either her roast beef—or her fireside. She can only afford boiled bones, and a stove-side.

Well. Boiled bones are not so bad things, neither. I know something more about *them* than the writer of the penny cookery book. Fifty years ago, Count Rumford perfectly ascertained the price, and nourishing power, of good soup;[5] and I shall give you a recipe for Theseus' vegetable diet, and for Lycurgus' black and

[1] [See above, p. 12.]
[2] [See Letter 25, § 2 (p. 448).]
[3] [For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 73, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 15).]
[4] [See Letter 22, § 7 (p. 376).]
[5] [More than "fifty years ago." Sir Benjamin Thompson, Count von Rumford (Bavaria), F.R.S., lived 1753–1814. His studies in cheap food were made at Munich in 1796 onwards. For a summary of his figures about soup, etc., see *An Essay on Food, and particularly on Feeding the Poor, exhibiting the Science of Nutrition and the Art of Providing Wholesome and Palatable Food at a Small Expense.* By Count Rumford, edited by Sir R. Musgrave (1847).]

Esau's red pottage, for your better pot-luck.[1] But what next?

15. To-day, you cannot afford beef—to-morrow, are you sure that you will be still able to afford bones? If things are to go on thus, and you are to study economy to the utmost, I can beat the author of the penny cookery book even on that ground. What say you to this diet of the Otomac Indians; persons quite of our present English character? "They have a decided aversion to cultivate the land, and live almost exclusively on hunting and fishing. They are men of a very robust constitution, and passionately fond of fermented liquors. While the waters of the Orinoco are low, they subsist on fish and turtles, but at the period of its inundations (when the fishing ceases) they eat daily, during some months, three-quarters of a pound of clay, slightly hardened by fire"*—(probably stewable in your modern stoves with better effect).—"Half, at least" (this is Father Gumilla's statement, quoted by Humboldt), "of the bread of the Otomacs and the Guamoes is clay—and those who feel a weight on their stomach, purge themselves with the fat of the crocodile, which restores their appetite, and enables them to continue to eat pure earth." "I doubt" —Humboldt himself goes on, "the manteca de caiman being a purgative. But it is certain that the Guamoes are very fond, if not of the fat, at least of the flesh, of the crocodile."

16. We have surely brickfields enough to keep our clay from ever rising to famine prices, in any fresh accession of

* Humboldt, *Personal Narrative*, London, 1827, vol. v., p. 640 *et seq.* I quote, as always, accurately, but missing the bits I don't want.

[1] [Ruskin did not give any of the promised recipes. For Theseus' vegetable diet, see above, p. 429 *n.* The reference to Lycurgus is to his Life by Plutarch, where, in describing the public repasts instituted by him, Plutarch says: "The dish that was in the highest esteem among them was the black broth. The old men were so fond of it that they ranged themselves on one side and ate it, leaving the meat to the young people. It is related of a king of Pontus that he purchased a Lacedæmonian cook for the sake of this broth. But when he came to taste it, he strongly expressed his dislike; and the cook made answer, 'Sir, to make this broth relish, it is necessary first to bathe in the Eurotas.'" For Esau's pottage, see Genesis xxv. 30.]

prosperity;—and though fish can't live in our rivers, the muddy waters are just of the consistence crocodiles like: and, at Manchester and Rochdale, I have observed the surfaces of the streams smoking, so that we need be under no concern as to temperature. I should think you might produce in them quite "streaky" crocodile,—fat and flesh concordant,—St. George becoming a bacon purveyor, as well as seller,[1] and laying down his dragon in salt (indeed it appears, by an experiment made in Egypt itself, that the oldest of human words is Bacon[2]); potted crocodile will doubtless, also, from countries unrestrained by religious prejudices, be imported, as the English demand increases, at lower quotations; and for what you are going to receive, the Lord make you truly thankful.

[1] [See Letter 26, § 5 (p. 476).]
[2] [Herodotus, ii. 2. Psammetichus isolated children from birth to see what they would "naturally" say. They said "*beko.*"]

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. ☞ I HOPE, in future, to arrange the publishing and editing of *Fors*, so that the current number may always be in my readers' hands on the first of the month: but I do not pledge myself for its being so. In case of delay, however, subscribers may always be secure of its ultimate delivery, as they would at once receive notice in the event of the non-continuance of the work. I find index-making more difficult and tedious than I expected,[1] and am besides bent at present on some Robinson Crusoe operations of harbour-digging,[2] which greatly interfere with literary work of every kind; but the thing is in progress.

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18. I cannot, myself, vouch for the facts stated in the following letter, but am secure of the writer's purpose to state them fairly, and grateful for his permission to print his letter:—

"1, ST. SWITHIN'S LANE, LONDON, E.C.,
"*4th February*, 1873.

"MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I have finished reading your *Munera Pulveris*, and your paragraph No. 160 is such a reflex of the experience I have of City business that I must call your attention to it.

"I told you that I was endeavouring to put into practice what you are teaching, and thus our work should be good work, whether we live or die.

"I read in the *Quarterly Journal of Science* that the waste of the Metropolitan sewage is equivalent to three million quartern loaves floating down the Thames every day. I read in the papers that *famine* fever has broken out in the Metropolis.

"I have proved that this bread can be saved by purifying sewage, and growing such corn with the produce as amazes those that have seen it.[3] I have proved this so completely to capitalists that they have spent £25,000 in demonstrating it to the Metropolitan Board of Works.

"'But nothing of this work will pay.'*

* The saying is only quoted in *Munera Pulveris* to be denied, the reader must observe. [Vol. XVII. p. 282.]

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[1] [See above, p. 437 *n.*]

[2] [For Ruskin's harbour-digging, see Vol. XXIII. p. xxiv.]

[3] [The reference in this letter is to a sewage process of which Mr. Sillar was one of the patentees, and which was worked by a company called the "Native Guano Company." See *The A. B. C. Sewage Process; being a Report of the Experiments hitherto made at Leicester, Tottenham, and Leamington, on the Purification and Utilization of Sewage.* Published in 1868, by W. C. Sillar, R. G. Sillar, and G. W. Wigner. "The A. B. C. mixture (so called from the initials of the three principal ingredients—Animal-charcoal, Blood, and Clay) is a compound which, when dissolved in either sewage or water, and added to the sewage, produces an immediate precipitation," etc. (p. 7). The second Report of the Rivers Pollution Commission (1870) reported unfavourably on the process; but it afterwards met with some expert approval, and was tried in various places. Experiments were made with it at Crossness (where was the outfall of Metropolitan sewage), but were abandoned. See Mr. Sillar's evidence in the *Second Report* of the Royal Commission on Metropolitan Sewage Discharge, 1884–1885, pp. 25–33; and §§ 161, 197 of the Report itself, where again the opinion expressed is not entirely favourable.]

"We have never puffed, we have never advertised, and hard work I have had to get the Board of Directors to agree to this modest procedure—nevertheless they have done so.

"Now, there is a band of conspirators on the Stock Exchange bound to destroy the Company, because, like Jezebel, they have sold a vineyard that does not belong to them—in other words, they have sold 'bears,' and they cannot fulfil their contract without killing the Company, or terrifying the shareholders into parting with their property.

"No stone is left unturned to thwart our work, and if you can take the trouble to look at the papers I send you, you will see what our work would be for the country, and how it is received.

"We are now to be turned out of Crossness, and every conceivable mischief will be made of the fact.

"I have fought the fight almost single-handed. I might have sold out and retired from the strife long ago, for our shares were 800 per cent. premium, but I prefer completing the work I have begun, if I am allowed.

"From very few human beings have I ever received, nor did I expect, anything but disapproval, for this effort to discountenance the City's business way of doing things, except Alfred Borwick, and my Brother, R. G. Sillar; but we have been repeatedly told that we *must* abandon these absurd principles. . . .

"However, with or without encouragement, I shall work on, though I have to do it through a mass of moral filth and corruption, compared with which a genuine cesspit is good company.

"Believe me sincerely yours,
"W. C. SILLAR."

19. The Third Fors puts into my hand, as I correct the press, a cutting from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of September 13th, 1869, which aptly illustrates the former "waste" of sewage referred to by Mr. Sillar:—

"We suffer much from boards of guardians and vestries in and about London, but what they must suffer in remote parts of the country may be imagined rather than described. At a late meeting of the Lincoln Board of Guardians Mr. Mantle gave a description of a visit he paid with other gentlemen to the village of Scotherne. What they saw he said he should never forget. The village was full of fever cases, and no wonder. The beck was dried up and the wells were filled with sewage matter. They went to one pump, and found the water emitted an unbearable stench. He (Mr. Mantle) asked a woman if she drank the water from the well, and she replied that she did, but that it stank a bit; and there could be no doubt about that, for the well was full of 'pure' sewage matter. They went to another house, occupied by a widow with five children, the head of the family having died of fever last year. This family was now on the books of the union. The house was built on a declivity; the pigsty, privy, vault, and cesspool were quite full, and after a shower of rain the contents were washed up to and past the door. The family was in an emaciated state, and one of the children was suffering from fever. After inspecting that part of the village, they proceeded to the house of a man named Harrison, who, with his wife, was laid up with fever; both man and wife were buried in one grave yesterday week, leaving five children to be supported by the union. When visited, the unfortunate couple were in the last stage of fever, and the villagers had such a dread of the disease that none of them would enter the house, and the clergyman and relieving officer had to administer the medicine themselves. Harrison was the best workman in the parish. The cost to the union has already been £12, and at the lowest computation a cost of £600 would fall upon the union for maintaining the children, and probably they might remain paupers for life. This amount would have been sufficient to drain the parish."

## LETTER 28

### SERVANTS' WAGES[1]

BRANTWOOD, *20th Feb.*, 1873.

1. I WAS again stopped[2] by a verse in St. John's Gospel this morning: not because I have not thought of it before, often enough; but because it bears much on our immediate business in one of its expressions,—"Ye shall be scattered, every man to his own."[3]

His own what?

His own property, his own rights, his own opinions, his own place, I suppose one must answer? Every man in his own place; and every man acting on his own opinions; and every man having his own way. Those are somewhat your own notions of the rightest possible state of things, are they not?

And do you not think it of any consequence to ask what sort of a place your own is?

As for instance, taking the reference farther on, to the one of Christ's followers who that night, most distinctly of all that were scattered, *found* his place, and stayed in it—"This ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to *his own place*."[4] What sort of a place?

2. It should interest you, surely, to ask of such things, since you all, whether you like them or not, *have* your own places; and whether you know them or not, your own

[1] ["Nurse's Wages" and "Christ's Footmen and Housemaids" were rejected titles for this Letter.]

[2] [As at the beginning of the last letter: see p. 489.]

[3] [John xvi. 32.]

[4] [Acts i. 25.]

opinions. It is too true that very often you fancy you think one thing, when, in reality, you think quite another. Most Christian persons, for instance, fancy they would like to be in heaven. But that is not their real opinion of the place at all. See how grave they will look if their doctor hints to them that there is the least probability of their soon going there.[1]

And the ascertaining what you really do think yourself, and do not merely fancy you think, because other people have said so; as also the ascertaining, if every man had indeed to go to his own place, what place he would verily have to go to, are most wholesome mental exercises; and there is no objection whatever to your giving weight to that really "private opinion," and that really "individual right."

3. But if you ever come really to know either what you think, or what you deserve, it is ten to one but you find it as much the character of Prudence as of Charity, that she "seeketh not her own."[2] For indeed that same apostle, who so accurately sought his own, and found it, is, in another verse, called the "Son of Loss." "Of them whom Thou gavest me, have I lost none, but the Son of Loss," says Christ (your unlucky translation, again, quenches the whole text by its poor Latinism—"perdition"[3]). Might it not be better to lose your place than to find it, on such terms?

But, lost or found, what do you think *is* your place at this moment? Are you minded to stay in it, if you are in it? Do you mind where it is, if you are out of it? What sort of creatures do you think yourselves? How do those you call your best friends think of you, when they advise you to claim your just place in the world?

4. I said, two letters back, that we would especially

[1] [Compare Ruskin's Introduction, § 14, to *The Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. *XVIII.* p. 395.]
[2] [1 Corinthians xiii. 5.]
[3] [John xvii. 12: compare Letter 77, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 111).]

reverence eight saints, and among them St. Paul.[1] I was startled to hear, only a few days afterwards, that the German critics have at last positively ascertained that St. Paul was Simon Magus;[2]—but I don't mind whether he was or not;—if he was, we have got seven saints, and one of the Magi, to reverence, instead of eight saints;—plainly and practically, whoever wrote the 13th of 1st Corinthians is to be much respected and attended to; not as the teacher of salvation by faith, still less of salvation by talking, nor even of salvation by almsgiving or martyrdom, but as the bold despiser of faith, talk-gift, and burning, if one has not love. Whereas this age of ours is so far contrary to any such Pauline doctrine that, without especial talent either for faith or martyrdom, and loquacious usually rather with the tongues of men than of angels,[3] it nevertheless thinks to get on, not merely without love of its neighbour, but founding all its proceedings on the precise contrary of that, —love of itself, and the seeking of every man for his own, —I should say of every beast for *its* own; for your modern social science openly confesses that it no longer considers you as men, but as having the nature of Beasts of Prey;* which made me more solicitous to explain to you the significance of that word "Park" in my last letter:[4] for indeed you have already pulled down the railings of those small green spots of park to purpose—and in a very solemn sense, turned all England into a Park. Alas!—if it were but even so much. Parks are for beasts of the field, which can dwell together in peace: but you have made yourselves beasts of the Desert, doleful creatures,[5] for whom the grass is green no more, nor dew falls on lawn or bank;

* See terminal notes [p. 524].

[1] [See Letter 26, § 10 *n.* (p. 482).]
[2] [For a destructive criticism of this theory of the Tübingen critics (Baur, Volkmar, and others), see Dr. Harnack's article on Simon Magus in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.]
[3] [See 1 Corinthians xiii. 1.]
[4] [Letter 27, § 5 (p. 494).]
[5] [Compare Isaiah xiii. 21.]

no flowers for you—not even the bare and quiet earth to lie down on, but only the sand-drift, and the dry places which the very Devils cannot rest in.[1] Here and there, beside our sweet English waters, the sower may still send forth the feet of the ox and the ass;[2] but for *men* with ox's heads, and ass's heads,—not the park, for these; by no manner of means the Park; but the everlasting Pound. Every man and beast being in their own place, *that* you choose for yours.

5. I have given you therefore, this month, for frontispiece, the completest picture[3] I can find of that pound or labyrinth which the Greeks supposed to have been built by Dædalus, to enclose the bestial nature, engrafted on humanity. The Man with the Bull's head. The Greek Dædalus[4] is the power of mechanical as opposed to imaginative art;* and this is the kind of architecture which Greeks and Florentines alike represent him as providing for human beasts. Could anything more precisely represent the general look of your architecture now? When I come down here, to Coniston, through Preston and Wigan, it seems to me that I have seen that thing itself, only built a little higher, and smoking, or else set on its side, and spinning round, a thousand times over in the course of the day.

6. Then the very writing of the name of it is so like your modern education! You miss the first letter of your lives; and begin with A for apple-pie, instead of L for love; and the rest of the writing is—some little—some big—some turned the wrong way; and the sum of it all to you, Perplexity. "Abberinto."

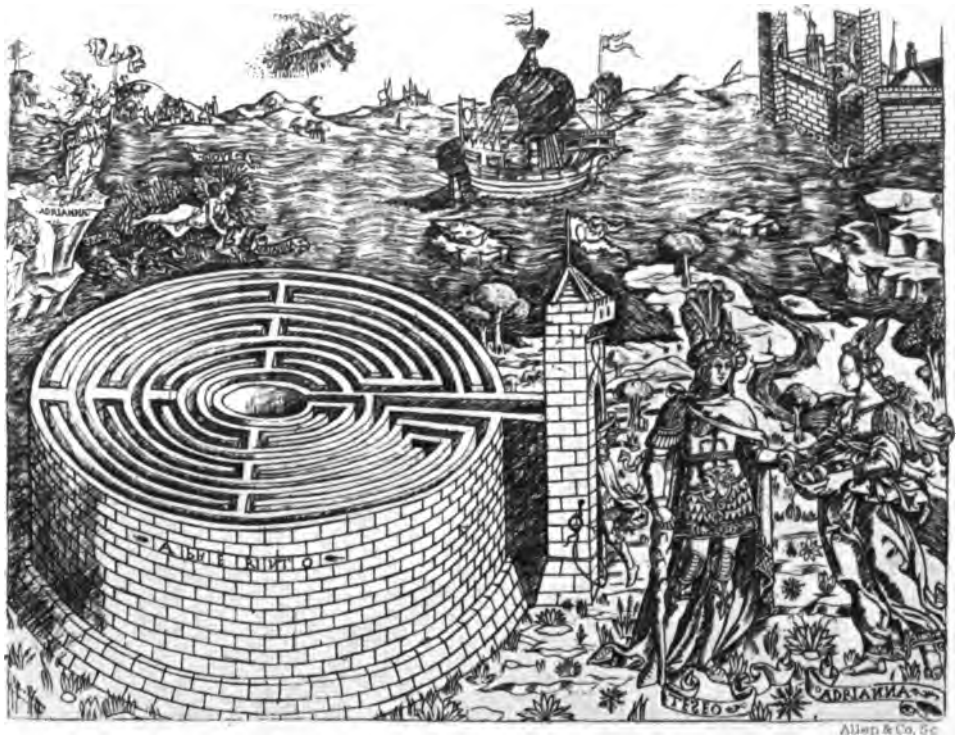
* Compare 23, § 10 [p. 403].

[1] [Compare Matthew xii. 43; Luke xi. 24.]

[2] [Compare Isaiah xxxii. 20.]

[3] [Hitherto given as frontispiece; now Plate XII., from an early Italian engraving attributed in the British Museum collection to the school of Finiguerra, and by other authorities to Baccio Baldini. Ascribed by Ruskin to Botticelli (above, p. 410).]

[4] [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 13 (Vol. XIX. p. 66), and Vol. XX. p. 352.]




**The Tale of Adriane,**

As it was told at Florence

For the rest, the old Florentine engraver took the story as it ran currently, that Theseus deserted Ariadne[1] (but, indeed, she was the letter L lost out of his life), and besides, you know if he ever *did* do anything wrong, it was all Titania's fault,—

> "Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night,
> And make him with fair Ægle break his faith,
> With Ariadne, and Antiopa?"[2]

7. If you have young eyes, or will help old ones with a magnifying glass, you will find all her story told. In the front, Theseus is giving her his faith; their names, TESEO . ADRIANNA, are written beneath them. He leans on his club reversed. She brings him three balls of thread, in case one, or even two, should not be long enough. His plumed cap means earthly victory; her winged one heavenly power and hope. Then, at the side of the arched gate of the labyrinth, Theseus has tied one end of the clue to a ring, and you see his back and left leg as he goes in. And just above, as the end of the adventure, he is sailing away from Naxos, with his black sail. On the left is the isle of Naxos, and deserted Ariadne waving Theseus back, with her scarf tied to a stick. Theseus not returning, she throws herself into the sea; you can see her feet, and her hand, still with the staff in it, as she plunges in backwards. Whereupon, winged Jupiter, GIOVE, comes down and lifts her out of the sea; you see her winged head raised to him. Then he carries her up to heaven. He holds her round the waist, but, strangely, she is not thinking of Jupiter at all, but of something above and more than Jupiter; her hands and head raised, as in some strong desire. But on the right, there is another fall, without such rising. Theseus' father throws himself into the sea from the wall of Athens, and you see *his* feet as he goes in; but there is no God to lift him out of the waves. He stays in his place, as Ariadne in hers.

[1] [On the two forms of the story, see above, p. 387 *n.*]
[2] [*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act ii. sc. 1.]

8. "Such an absurd old picture, or old story, you never saw or heard of? The very blaze of fireworks, in which Jupiter descends, drawn with black sparks instead of white! the whole point of the thing, the 'terrific combat,' missed out of the play, and nothing, on the whole, seen, except people's legs, as in a modern pantomime, only not to so much advantage."

That is what you think of it? Well, such as it is, that is "fine art" (if you will take my opinion in my own business); and even this poor photograph of it is simply worth all the illustrations in your *Illustrated News* or *Illustrated Times* from one year's end to another. Worth them all—nay, there is no comparison, for these illustrated papers do you definite mischief, and the more you look at them, the worse for you. Whereas, the longer you look at this, and think of it, the more good you will get.

9. Examine, for instance, that absurdly tall crest of Theseus. Behind it, if you look closely, you will see that he also has the wings of hope on his helmet; but the upright plumes nearly hide them. Have you never seen anything like them before? They are five here, indeed; but you have surely met with them elsewhere,—in number, Three—those curling, upright plumes?

For that Prince who waited on his father and the French Knights in the castle of Calais,[1] bears them in memory of the good knight and king who fought sightless at Crécy; whose bearings they were, with the motto which you know so well, yet are so little minded to take for your own,—"I serve." Also the cap of the Knights of St. George has these white plumes "of three falls," but the Prince of Wales more fitly, because the meaning of the ostrich feather is order and rule;[2] for it was seen that, long and loose though the filaments seemed, no wind

[1] [For this story of the Black Prince, see above, Letter 25, § 16 (p. 463). For the adoption, thenceforward, by the Prince of Wales, of the crest and arms of John, the blind King of Bohemia, slain at the battle of Crécy, see Vol. XVIII. p. 463.]

[2] [See Guillim, p. 225 (1638 edition).]

could entangle or make them disorderly. "So this plume betokeneth such an one as nothing can disturb his mind or disquiet his spirits, but is ever one and the same." Do you see how one thing bears out and fulfils another, in these thoughts and symbols of the despised people of old time? Do you recollect Froissart's words of the New Year's Feast at Calais?

"So they were served in peace, and in great leisure."[1]

You have improved *that* state of things, at any rate. I must say so much for you, at Wolverton, and Rugby, and such other places of travellers' repose.

Theseus, then, to finish with him for this time, bears these plumes specially as the Institutor of Order and Law at Athens; the Prince or beginner[2] of the State there; and your own Prince of Wales bears them in like manner as the beginner of State with us (the mocking and purposeful lawlessness of Henry the Fifth when Prince, yet never indeed violating law, or losing self-command, is one of the notablest signs, rightly read, in the world's history). And now I want you to consider with me very carefully the true meaning of the words he begins his State with:—

"I serve."

10. You have, I hope, noticed that throughout these letters addressed to you as workmen and labourers,—though I have once or twice ventured to call myself your fellow-workman, I have oftener spoken as belonging to, and sharing main modes of thought with, those who are not labourers, but either live in various ways by their wits—as lawyers, authors, reviewers, clergymen, parliamentary orators, and the like—or absolutely in idleness on the labour of others,—as the representative Squire. And, broadly speaking, I address you as workers, and speak in the name of the rest as idlers, thus not estimating the mere wit-work as work at all: it is always play, when it is good.[3]

Speaking to you, then, as workers, and of myself as an

[1] [See Letter 25, § 16 (p. 463).]
[2] [See *Munera Pulveris*, § 105 (Vol. XVII. p. 229).]
[3] [Compare, above, p. 147 *n.*]

due honey-making kind. "Hark," says an old Athenian, according to Aristophanes, "how the nightingale has filled the thickets with honey" (meaning, with music as sweet).[1] In Yorkshire, your steam-nightingales fill the woods with —Buzz; and for four miles round are audible,[2] summoning you—to your pleasure, I suppose, my free-born?

It is well, I repeat, if you are so much as serfs. A serf means a "saved person"[3]—the word comes first from a Greek one, meaning to drag, or drag away into safety (though captive safety), out of the slaughter of war. But alas, the trades most of you are set to nowadays have no element of safety in them, either for body or soul. They take thirty years from your lives here;—what they take from your lives hereafter, ask your clergy. I have no opinion on that matter.

14. But I used another terrible word just now—"menial." The modern English vulgar mind has a wonderful dread of doing anything of that sort!

I suppose there is scarcely another word in the language which people more dislike having applied to them, or of which they less understand the application. It comes from a beautiful old Chaucerian word, "meinie," or many, signifying the attendant company of any one worth attending to; the disciples of a master, scholars of a teacher, soldiers of a leader, lords of a King. Chaucer says the God of Love came, in the garden of the Rose, with "his many";[4]

[1] [*Birds*, 224; quoted also in *Love's Meinie*, § 38 (Vol. XXV. p. 42).]

[2] [See the letter from Wakefield in Letter 57 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 412), where the steam-whistle, or "American devil," is said to be audible "*five* miles off." For another reference to it, see below, p. 600.]

[3] [This is the etymology given by Justinian (*Institutes*, i. 3, 3): "They are called *servi* because military commanders are accustomed to sell the slaves and thus *save* them, instead of killing them." Ruskin apparently connects *servus* with the Greek σύρω. Modern etymologists derive *servus* from the root *svar* (a weight), comparing the Greek ἕρμα.]

[4] [See *Romaunt of the Rose*, 605, 1305, where, however, it is (in the first place) "Sir Myrthe," and (in the latter) "Faire Idilnesse," who comes into the garden with his "meynee": The God of Love enters with a retinue of birds, hence the title of Ruskin's book on birds, *Love's Meinie* (see Vol. XXV. pp. xxiv., 13); Chaucer, however, does not himself use the word in that passage. For Ruskin's next reference, see *The Sompnoures Tale*, 343:—

"Irous Cambyses was eek dronkelewe,
And eye delited him to ben a schrewe;
And so bifel, a lord of his meigne," etc.]

—in the court of the King of Persia spoke a Lord, one "of his many." Therefore there is nothing in itself dishonourable in being menial: the only question is—*whose* many you belong to, and whether he is a person worth belonging to, or even safe to be belonged to; also, there is somewhat in the cause of your following: if you follow for love, it is good to be menial—if for honour, good also; —if for ten per cent.—as a railroad company follows its Director, it is not good to be menial. Also there is somewhat in the manner of following: if you obey your Task-master's eye,[1] it is well;—if only his whip, still, well; but not so well:—but, above all, or below all, if you have to obey the whip as a bad hound, because you have no nose, like the members of the present House of Commons, it is a very humble form of menial service indeed.

But even as to the quite literal form of it, in house or domestic service, are you sure it is so very disgraceful a state to live in?

15. Among the people whom one must miss out of one's life, dead, or worse than dead, by the time one is fifty-four, I can only say, for my own part, that the one I practically and truly miss most, next to father and mother (and putting losses of imaginary good out of the question), was a "menial," my father's nurse, and mine.[2] She was one of our many (our many being always but few), and from her girlhood to her old age, the entire ability of her life was given to serving us. She had a natural gift and specialty for doing disagreeable things; above all, the service of a sick room; so that she was never quite in her glory unless some of us were ill. She had also some parallel specialty for *saying* disagreeable things; and might be relied upon to give the extremely darkest view of any subject, before proceeding to ameliorative action upon it. And she had a very creditable and republican aversion to doing immediately, or in set terms,

[1] ["As ever in my great Task-master's eye" (Milton: "On his being arrived at the Age of Twenty-three").]

[2] [See Vol. XXII. p. xviii.]

as she was bid; so that when my mother and she got old together, and my mother became very imperative and particular about having her teacup set on one side of her little round table, Anne would observantly and punctiliously put it always on the other; which caused my mother to state to me, every morning after breakfast, gravely, that, if ever a woman in this world was possessed by the Devil, Anne was that woman.[1] But in spite of these momentary and petulant aspirations to liberality and independence of character, poor Anne remained verily servile in soul all her days; and was altogether occupied from the age of fifteen to seventy-two, in doing other people's wills instead of her own, and seeking other people's good instead of her own: nor did I ever hear on any occasion of her doing harm to a human being, except by saving two hundred and some odd pounds for her relations; in consequence of which some of them, after her funeral, did not speak to the rest for several months.[2]

16. Two hundred and odd pounds;—it might have been more; but I used to hear of little loans to the relations occasionally; and besides, Anne would sometimes buy a quite unjustifiably expensive silk gown. People in her station of life are always so improvident. Two hundred odd pounds at all events she had laid by, in her fifty-seven years of unselfish labour. Actually twenty ten-pound notes. I heard the other day, to my great satisfaction, of the approaching marriage of a charming girl;—but to my dissatisfaction, that the approach was slow. "We can't marry yet"—said she;—"you know, we can't possibly marry on five hundred a year." People in that station of life are always so provident.

Two hundred odd pounds,—that was what the Third Fors, in due alliance with her sisters,[3] thought fit to reward our Anne with, for fifty years of days' work and nights' watching; and what will not a dash of a pen win, sometimes, in the hands of superior persons! Surely the

[1] [For a reference to this passage, see *Præterita*, ii. § 233.]

[2] [§ 15 of this letter was used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where it appears, slightly revised, as § 31 of vol. i. ch. i. His autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 33, § 13 (p. 617).]

[3] [Fortune, with Courage and Patience: see Letter 15, § 14 *n.* (p. 270).]

condition must be a degraded one which can do no better for itself than this!

17. And yet, have you ever taken a wise man's real opinion on this matter? You are not fond of hearing opinions of wise men; you like your anonymous penny-a-liners' opinions better. But do you think you could tolerantly receive that of a moderately and popularly wise man —such an one as Charles Dickens, for example? Have you ever considered seriously what *his* opinion was, about "Dependants" and "Menials"? He did not perhaps quite know what it was himself;—it needs wisdom of stronger make than his to be sure of what it *does* think. He would talk, in his moral passages, about Independence, and Self-dependence, and making one's way in the world, just like any hack of the "Eatanswill Independent."[1] But which of the people of his imagination, of his own true children, did he love and honour most? Who are your favourites in his books—as they have been his? Menials, it strikes me, many of them. Sam, Mark, Kit, Peggotty, Mary-my-dear,—even the poor little Marchioness! I don't think Dickens intended you to look upon any of them disrespectfully. Or going one grade higher in his society, Tom Pinch, Newman Noggs, Tim Linkinwater, Oliver Twist — how independent, all of them! Very nearly menial, in soul, if they chance on a good master; none of them brilliant in fortune, nor vigorous in action. Is not the entire testimony of Dickens, traced in its true force, that no position is so *good* for men and women, none so likely to bring out their best human character, as that of a dependant, or menial? And yet with your supreme modern logic, instead of enthusiastically concluding from his works

[1] [See *Pickwick Papers*, ch. xiii. For Sam Weller's "Mary, my dear" (housemaid to Mr. Nupkins), see *ibid.*, ch. xxv. For Mark Tapley (hostler at the Blue Dragon: compare Letter 93, Vol. XXIX. p. 475) and Tom Pinch (assistant to Mr. Pecksniff), see *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Clara Peggotty (servant to Mrs. Copperfield and David's nurse) was among Dickens's favourite characters (see Forster's *Life*, vol. iii. p. 16). For Kit Nubbles (errand-boy to Little Nell's grandfather) and "the Marchioness" (servant to Mr. Sampson Brass), see *The Old Curiosity Shop*, passim; and for Newman Noggs (Mr. Ralph Nickleby's clerk), Tim Linkinwater (chief clerk of the Cheeryble Brothers) and Sir Mulberry Hawk, *Nicholas Nickleby*.]

"let us all be servants," one would think the notion he put in your heads was quite the other, "let us all be masters," and that you understood his ideal of heroic English character to be given in Mr. Pecksniff or Sir Mulberry Hawk!

18. Alas! more's the pity you cannot all be dependants and menials, even if you were wise enough to wish it. Somebody there must be to be served, else there could be no service. And for the beatitudes and virtues of Masterhood, I must appeal to a wiser man than Dickens—but it is no use entering on that part of the question to-day;[1] in the meantime, here is another letter of his (you have had one letter already in last *Fors*[2]), just come under my hand, which gives you a sketch of a practical landlord, and *true* Master, on which you may meditate with advantage.

"Here, above all, we had the opportunity of seeing in what universal respect and comfort a gentleman's family may live in that country, *and in* far from its most favoured district; provided only they live there habitually and do their duty as the friends and guardians of those among whom Providence has appointed their proper place. Here we found neither mud hovels nor naked peasantry, but snug cottages and smiling faces all about. Here there was a very large school in the village, of which masters and pupils were, in nearly equal proportion, Protestants and Roman Catholics, the Protestant Squire himself making it a regular part of his daily business to visit the scene of their operations, and strengthen authority and enforce discipline by personal superintendence. Here, too, we pleased ourselves with recognising some of the sweetest features in Goldsmith's picture of 'Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain'; and, in particular, we had 'the playful children just let loose from school' in perfection. *Mr.* Edgeworth's paternal heart delighted in letting them make a play-ground of his lawn; and every evening, after dinner, we saw leap-frog going on with the highest spirit within fifty yards of the drawing-room windows, while fathers and mothers, and their aged parents also, were grouped about among the trees watching the sport. It is a curious enough coincidence that Oliver Goldsmith and Maria Edgeworth should both have derived their early love and knowledge of Irish character and manners from the same identical district. He received part of his education at this very school of Edgeworthstown; and Pallasmore (the 'locus cui nomen est Pallas' of Johnson's epitaph), the little hamlet where the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield* first saw the light, is still, as it was in his time, the property of the Edgeworths."[3]

[1] [The subject is resumed in Letter 29, § 5 (p. 531). See also a passage in Appendix 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 536).]

[2] [Letter 27, § 13 (p. 500).]

[3] [Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. vi. pp. 58, 59 (letter from Edgeworthstown, August 1825).]

19. "Strengthen authority," "enforce discipline"! What ugly expressions these! and a "whole hamlet," though it *be* a little one, "the property of the Edgeworths"! How long are such things yet to be? thinks my Republican correspondent,[1] I suppose—from whom, to my regret, I have had no further dispatch since I endeavoured to answer his interrogations.* Only, note further respecting this chief question of the right of private property, that there are two kinds of ownership, which the Greeks wisely expressed in two different ways: the first, with the word which brought me to a pause in St. John's Gospel,[2] "idios," signifying the way, for instance, in which a man's opinions and interests are his own; "idia," so that by persisting in them, independently of the truth, which is above opinion, and of the public interest, which is above private, he becomes what we very properly, borrowing the Greek word, call an "idiot."[3] But their other phrase expresses the kind of belonging which is nobly won, and is truly and inviolably ours, in which sense a man may learn the full meaning of the word "Mine" only once in his life,—happy he who has ever so learnt it.[4] I was thinking over the prettiness of the word in that sense, a day or two ago, and opening a letter, mechanically, when a newspaper clipping dropped out of it (I don't know from what paper), containing a quotation from the *Cornhill Magazine*[5] setting forth the present privileges of the agricultural labourer attained for him by modern improvements in machinery, in the following terms:—

"An agricultural labourer, from forty to forty-five years of age, of tried skill, of probity, and sobriety, with £200 in his pocket, is a made man. True, he has had to forego the luxury of marriage; but so have his betters."

* 21st March: one just received, interesting, and to be answered next month.[6]

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[1] [See Letter 25, § 25 (p. 470).]

[2] [See above, § 1, p. 507.]

[3] [Compare Vol. XVII. p. 88. For an additional passage on this word, see Appendix 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 537).]

[4] [See Letter 91, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 445).]

[5] [Two anonymous articles on "The Agricultural Labourer" in the *Cornhill Magazine*, February and March 1873, vol. 27, pp. 215 and 307. See Vol. XVII. p. 561; Letter 73, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 18); Appendix 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 538) and *Love's Meinie*, § 39 (Vol. XXV. p. 44).]

[6] [Letter 29, § 16 (p. 543).]

20. And I think you may be grateful to the Third Fors for this clipping; which you see settles, in the region of Cornhill, at least, the question whether you are the betters or the worses of your masters. Decidedly the worses, according to the *Cornhill*. Also, exactly the sum which my old nurse had for her reward at the end of her life, is, you see, to be the agricultural labourer's reward in the crowning triumph of his;—provided always that he has followed the example of his betters on the stock exchange and in trade, in the observance of the strictest probity;—that he be entirely skilful;—not given to purchasing two shillings' worth of liquor for twenty-seven and sixpence,[1]—and finally, until the age of forty-five, has dispensed with the luxury of marriage.

I have just said I didn't want to make Catholics of you;[2] but truly I think your Protestantism is becoming *too* fierce in its opposition to the Popedom. Cannot it be content with preaching the marriage of the clergy, but it *must* preach also the celibacy of the laity?

21. And the moral and anti-Byronic Mrs. B. Stowe, who so charmingly and pathetically describes the terrors of slavery,[3] as an institution which separates men from their wives, and mothers from their children! Did she really contemplate, among the results contributed to by her interesting volumes, these ultimate privileges of Liberty,—that the men, at least under the age of forty-five, are not to have any wives to be separated from; and that the women, who under these circumstances have the misfortune to become mothers, are to feel it a hardship, not to be parted from their children, but to be prevented from accelerating the parting with a little soothing syrup?[4]

[1] [See Letter 27, § 10 (p. 498).]
[2] [See above, p. 493.]
[3] [For other references to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, see Vol. XVII. p. 476 n. Mrs. Stowe is here called "anti-Byronic" with reference to her then recently published *Lady Byron Vindicated* (1870). Her charges against Byron excited much indignation at the time; but new light has been thrown on the matter by Lord Lovelace's *Astarte* (1905).]
[4] [See above, p. 432.]

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

22. I HAVE kept by me, and now reprint from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of July 6th, 1868, the following report of a meeting held on the Labour Question by the Social Science Association in the previous week.[1] It will be seen that it contains confirmation of my statement in § 4 of the text. The passage I have italicized contains the sense of the views then entertained by the majority of the meeting. I think it desirable also to keep note of the questions I proposed to the meeting, and of the answers given in the *Gazette*. I print the article, therefore, entire:—

## THE SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION ON THE LABOUR QUESTION

THERE would be something touching in the way in which people discuss the question of labour and wages, and in the desperate efforts made by Mr. Gladstone and other persons of high position to make love to the workmen, if there was not almost always a touch of absurdity in such proceedings. Mr. Gladstone, in particular, never approaches such subjects without an elaborate patting and stroking of the working man, which is intelligible only upon the assumption that *primâ facie* the labourer and the gentleman are natural enemies, and that they must be expected to regard each other as such, unless the higher class approaches the lower with the most elaborate assurances of goodwill and kindness. Such language as the following appears to us very ill-judged. After condemning in strong terms the crimes committed by some trade unions, Mr. Gladstone went on to say:—"Some things the working men required at their hands. In the first place, it was required that they should be approached in a friendly spirit, that they should feel that they were able to place confidence in their good intentions, that they should be assured that they were not approached in the spirit of class, but in the spirit of men who were attached to the truth," etc., etc. What can be the use of this sort of preaching? Does any human being suppose that any kind of men whatsoever, whether working men or idle men, are indifferent to being approached in an unfriendly spirit, or are disposed to deal with people whom they believe to entertain bad intentions towards them, or to be utterly indifferent to their interests, or to be actuated by interests opposed to their own? Such protestations always appear to us either prosy, patronizing, or insincere. No one suspects Mr. Gladstone of insincerity, but at times he is as prosy as a man must be, who, being already fully occupied with politics, will never miss an opportunity of doing a little philanthropy and promoting peace and goodwill between different classes of the community. Blessed no doubt are the peacemakers, but at times they are bores.

After Mr. Gladstone's little sermon the meeting proceeded to discuss a variety of resolutions about strikes, some of which seem very unimportant. *One piece of vigorous good sense enlivened the discussion, and appears to us to sum up pretty*

[1] [For Ruskin's speech at this meeting, see Vol. XVII. pp. 536–538.]

*nearly all that can be said upon the whole subject of strikes. It was uttered by Mr. Applegarth, who observed that "no sentiment ought to be brought into the subject. The employers were like the employed in trying to get as much as possible for as little as they could." Add to this the obvious qualification that even in driving a bargain it is possible to insist too strongly upon your own interest, and that it never can be in the interest either of masters or of men that the profits of any given trade to the capitalist should be permanently depressed much below the average profits of other trades; and nearly all that can be said upon the subject will have been said.* If, instead of meeting together and kissing each other in public, masters and men would treat each other simply as civilized and rational beings who have to drive a bargain, and who have a common interest in producing the maximum of profit, though their interests in dividing it when it is produced are conflicting, they would get on much better together. People can buy and sell all sorts of other things without either quarrelling or crying over the transaction, and if they could only see it, there is no reason why they should not deal in labour just as coolly.

The most remarkable feature of the evening was the attack made by Mr. Ruskin on this view of the subject. Replying to Mr. Dering, who had said that whenever it was possible "men would seek their own interests even at the expense of other classes," he observed * that many students of political economy "looked upon man as a predatory animal, while man on the contrary was an affectionate animal, and until the mutual interest of classes was based upon affection, difficulties must continue between those classes." There are, as it appears to us, several weak points in this statement. One obvious one is that most animals are both predatory and affectionate. Wolves will play together, herd together, hunt together, kill sheep together; and yet, if one wolf is wounded, the rest will eat him up. Animals, too, which as between each other are highly affectionate, are predatory to the last degree as against creatures of a different species or creatures of their own species who have got something which they want. Hence, if men are actuated to some extent at some times, and towards some persons, by their affections, and to a different extent at other times towards the same or other persons by their predatory instincts, they would resemble other animals. Mr. Ruskin's opposition between the predatory and affectionate animal is thus merely imaginary. Apart from this, the description of man as "an affectionate animal" appears to us not merely incomplete but misleading. Of course the affections are a most important branch of human nature, but they are by no means the whole of it. A very large department of human nature is primarily self-regarding. A man eats and drinks because he is hungry or thirsty, and he buys and sells because he wants to get gain. These are and always will be his leading motives, but they are no doubt to a certain extent counteracted in civilized life by motives of a different kind. No man is altogether destitute of regard for the interests and wishes of his neighbours, and almost every one will sacrifice something more or less for the gratification of others. Still, self-interest of the most direct unmistakable kind is the great leading active principle in many departments of life, and in particular in the trading department; to deny this is to shut one's eyes to the sun at noonday. To try to change is like trying to stop the revolution of the earth. To call it a "predatory" instinct is to talk at random. To take from a man by force what he possesses is an essentially different thing from driving the hardest of hard bargains with him. Every bargain is regarded as an advantage by both parties at the time when it is made. Otherwise it would not be made at all. If I save a drowning man's life on condition that he will convey to me his whole estate, he is better off than if I leave him to drown. My act is certainly not affectionate, but neither is it predatory. It improves the condition of both parties, and the same is true of all trade.

* I observed nothing of the kind. It was the previous speaker (unknown to me, but according to the *Pall Mall* Mr. Dering) who not merely "observed" but positively affirmed, as the only groundwork of sound political economy, that the nature of man was that of a beast of prey, to all his fellows.

The most singular part of Mr. Ruskin's address consisted of a catechism which appears to us to admit of very simple answers, which we will proceed to give, as "the questions were received with much applause," though we do not appreciate their importance. They are as follows:—

*Question.*—"1. It is stated in a paper read before the jurisprudence section of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, and afterwards published at their office, that "without the capitalist labour could accomplish nothing" (p. 4). But for long periods of time in some parts of the world the accumulation of money was forbidden, and in others it was impossible. Has labour never accomplished anything in such districts?"

*Answer.*—Capital is not merely "an accumulation of money." It is a general name for the whole stock by and out of which things are made. Labour never accomplished anything without materials or anything important without tools, and materials and tools are capital.

*Question.*—"2. Supposing that in the present state of England the capital is necessary, are capitalists so? In other words, is it needful for right operation of capital that it should be administered under the arbitrary power of one person?"

*Answer.*—Yes, it is, unless you do away with the institution of private property. It is necessary for the right operation of capital that some one or other should have arbitrary power over it, and that arbitrary power must either be lodged in individuals, who thereupon become capitalists, or else in the public or its representatives, in which case there is only one capitalist—the State.

*Question.*—"3. Whence is all capital derived?"

*Answer.*—From the combination of labour and material.

*Question.*—"4. If capital is spent in paying wages for labour or manufacture which brings no return (as the labour of an acrobat or manufacturer of fireworks), is such capital lost or not? and if lost, what is the effect of such loss on the future wages fund?"

*Answer.*—In the case supposed the capital ceases to exist as capital, and the future wages fund is diminished to that extent; but see the next answer.

*Question.*—"5. If under such circumstances it is lost, and can only be recovered (much more recovered with interest) when it has been spent in wages for productive labour or manufacture, what labours and manufactures are productive, and what are unproductive? Do all capitalists know the difference, and are they always desirous to employ men in productive labours and manufactures, and in these only?"

*Answer.*—Generally speaking, productive labour means labour which produces useful or agreeable results. Probably no paid labour is absolutely unproductive; for instance, the feats of the acrobat and the fireworks amuse the spectators. Capitalists in general desire to employ men in labours and manufactures which produce gain to the capitalists themselves. The amount of the gain depends on the relation between the demand for the product and the cost of production; and the demand for the product depends principally upon the extent to which it is useful or agreeable—that is, upon the extent to which the labour is productive or unproductive. In this indirect way capitalists are generally desirous to employ men in productive labours and manufactures, and in them only.

*Question.*—"6. Considering the unemployed and purchasing public as a great capitalist, employing the workmen and their masters both, what results happen finally to this purchasing public if it employs all its manufactures in productive labour? and what if it employs them all in unproductive labour?"

*Answer.*—This is not the light in which we should consider the "unemployed and purchasing public." But if they are all to be considered in that light, it is obvious that the result of employing all manufactures in doing what is useless or disagreeable would be general misery, and *vice versâ*.

*Question.*—"7. If there are thirty workmen, ready to do a day's work, and there is only a day's work for one of them to do, what is the effect of the natural laws of wages on the other twenty-nine?"

*Answer.*—The twenty-nine must go without work and wages; but the phrase "natural law" is not ours.

of the community is being diminished; and whenever you have reason to think that anybody has charged you threepence for a twopenny article, remember that, according to the *Daily News*, "the real capital of the community is increased."[1] And as I believe you may be generally certain, in the present state of trade, of being charged even as much as twenty-seven pence for a twopenny article,[2] the capital of the community must be increasing very fast indeed. Holding these enlightened views on the subject of the *prices* of things, the *Daily News* cannot be expected to stoop to any consideration of their *uses*. But there is another "net result" of the high price of coal, besides the increase of the capital of the community, and a result which is more immediately your affair—namely, that a good many of you will die of cold. It may console you to reflect that a great many rich people will at least feel chilly, in economical drawing-rooms of state, and in ill-aired houses, rawly built on raw ground, and already mouldy for want of fires, though under a blackened sky.

3. What a pestilence of them, and unseemly plague of builders' work—as if the bricks of Egypt had multiplied like its lice, and alighted like its locusts—has fallen on the suburbs of loathsome London?

The road from the village of Shirley, near Addington, where my father and mother are buried,[3] to the house[4] they lived in when I was four years old, lay, at that time, through a quite secluded district of field and wood, traversed here and there by winding lanes, and by one or two smooth mail-coach roads, beside which, at intervals of a mile or two, stood some gentleman's house, with its lawn, gardens, offices, and attached fields, indicating a country life of long continuance and quiet respectability. Except such an one here and there, one saw no dwellings above the size of cottages or small farmsteads; these, wood-built usually,

[1] [For reply of the *Daily News*, see Letter 30, § 10 (p. 560).]
[2] [Spirits: see Letter 27, § 10 (p. 498.]
[3] [See Vol. XVII. p. lxxvii.]
[4] [Now No. 28 Herne Hill.]

and thatched, their porches embroidered with honeysuckle, and their gardens with daisies, their doors mostly ajar, or with a half one shut to keep in the children, and a bricked or tiled footway from it to the wicket gate,—all neatly kept, and vivid with a sense of the quiet energies of their contented tenants,—made the lane-turnings cheerful, and gleamed in half-hidden clusters beneath the slopes of the woodlands at Sydenham and Penge. There were no signs of distress, of effort, or of change; many of enjoyment, and not a few of wealth beyond the daily needs of life. That same district is now covered by, literally, many thousands of houses built within the last ten years, of rotten brick, with various iron devices to hold it together. They, every one, have a drawing-room and dining-room, transparent from back to front, so that from the road one sees the people's heads inside, clear against the light. They have a second story of bedrooms, and an underground one of kitchen. They are fastened in a Siamese-twin manner together by their sides, and each couple has a Greek or Gothic portico shared between them, with magnificent steps, and highly ornamented capitals. Attached to every double block are exactly similar double parallelograms of garden, laid out in new gravel and scanty turf, on the model of the pleasure grounds in the Crystal Palace, and enclosed by high, thin, and pale brick walls. The gardens in front are fenced from the road with an immense weight of cast iron, and entered between two square gate-posts, with projecting stucco cornices, bearing the information that the eligible residence within is Mortimer House or Montague Villa. On the other side of the road, which is laid freshly down with large flints, and is deep at the sides in ruts of yellow mud, one sees Burleigh House, or Devonshire Villa, still to let, and getting leprous in patches all over the fronts.

4. Think what the real state of life is, for the people who are content to pass it in such places; and what the people themselves must be. Of the men, their wives, and children, who live in any of those houses, probably not the

fifth part are possessed of one common manly or womanly skill, knowledge, or means of happiness. The men can indeed write, and cast accounts, and go to town every day to get their living by doing so; the women and children can perhaps read story-books, dance in a vulgar manner, and play on the piano with dull dexterities for exhibition; but not a member of the whole family can, in general, cook, sweep, knock in a nail, drive a stake, or spin a thread. They are still less capable of finer work. They know nothing of painting, sculpture, or architecture; of science, inaccurately, as much as may more or less account to them for Mr. Pepper's ghost,[1] and make them disbelieve in the existence of any other ghost but that, particularly the Holy One: of books, they read *Macmillan's Magazine* on week days, and *Good Words* on Sundays, and are entirely ignorant of all the standard literature belonging to their own country, or to any other. They never think of taking a walk, and, the roads for six miles round them being ankle deep in mud and flints, they could not if they would. They cannot enjoy their gardens, for they have neither sense nor strength enough to work in them. The women and girls have no pleasures but in calling on each other in false hair, cheap dresses of gaudy stuffs, machine made, and high-heeled boots, of which the pattern was set to them by Parisian prostitutes of the lowest order: the men have no faculty beyond that of cheating in business; no pleasures but in smoking or eating; and no ideas, nor any capacity of forming ideas, of anything that has yet been done of great, or seen of good, in this world.

5. That is the typical condition of five-sixths, at least, of the "rising" middle classes about London—the lodgers in those damp shells of brick, which one cannot say they inhabit, nor call their "houses"; nor "their's" indeed, in any sense; but packing-cases in which they are temporarily stored, for bad use. Put the things on wheels (it is already done in America, but you must build them stronger

[1] [For this entertainment, see Vol. XVIII. p. 96 n.]

first), and they are mere railway vans of brick, thrust in rows on the siding; vans full of monkeys that have lost the use of their legs. The baboons in Regent's Park—with Mr. Darwin's pardon—*are* of another species; a less passive, and infinitely wittier one. Here, behold, you have a group of gregarious creatures that cannot climb, and are entirely imitative, not as the apes, occasionally, for the humour of it, but all their lives long; the builders trying to build as Christians did once, though now swindling on every brick they lay; and the lodgers to live like the Duke of Devonshire, on the salaries of railroad clerks. Lodgers, do I say? Scarcely even that. Many a cottage, lodged in but for a year or two, has been made a true home, for that span of the owner's life. In my next letter but one,[1] I hope to give you some abstract of the man's life whose testimony I want you to compare with that of Dickens, as to the positions of Master and Servant:[2] meantime compare with what you may see of these railroad homes, this incidental notice by him of *his* first one:—

"When we approached that village (Lasswade), Scott, who had laid hold of my arm, turned along the road in a direction not leading to the place where the carriage was to meet us. After walking some minutes towards Edinburgh, I suggested that we were losing the scenery of the Esk, and, besides, had Dalkeith Palace yet to see.

"'Yes,' said he, 'and I have been bringing you where there is little enough to be seen, only that Scotch cottage (one by the roadside, with a small garth); but, though not worth looking at, I could not pass it. It was our first country house when newly married, and many a contrivance we had to make it comfortable. I made a dining-table for it with my own hands. Look at these two miserable willow trees on either side the gate into the enclosure; they are tied together at the top to be an arch, and a cross made of two sticks over them is not yet decayed. To be sure, it is not much of a lion to show a stranger; but I wanted to see it again myself, for I assure you that after I had constructed it, mamma (Mrs. Scott) and I both of us thought it so fine, we turned out to see it by moonlight, and walked backwards from it to the cottage door, in admiration of our own magnificence and its picturesque effect. I did want to see if it was still there.'"[3]

[1] [See Letter 31, pp. 562 *seq.*]
[2] [See Letter 28, §§ 17, 18 (pp. 519, 520).]
[3] [Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. ii. pp. 182, 183 (recollections by Mr. Morritt, 1808).]

6. I had scarcely looked out this passage for you, when I received a letter from the friend who sent me the penny cookery book,[1] incidentally telling me of the breaking up of a real home. I have obtained her leave to let you read part of it. It will come with no disadvantage, even after Scott's, recording as it does the same kind of simple and natural life, now passing so fast away. The same life, and also in the district which, henceforward, I mean to call "Sir Walter's Land"; definable as the entire breadth of Scots and English ground from sea to sea, coast and isle included, between Schehallien on the north, and Ingleborough on the south.[2] (I have my reasons, though some readers may doubt them, for fixing the limit south of Skye, and north of Ashby-de-la-Zouche.) Within this district, then, but I shall not say in what part of it, the home my friend speaks of stood. In many respects it was *like* the "Fair-ladies" in *Redgauntlet*;[3] as near the coast, as secluded, and in the same kind of country; still more *like*, in its mistress's simple and loyal beneficence. Therefore, because I do not like leaving a blank for its name, I put "Fair-ladies" for it in the letter, of which the part I wish you to see begins thus:—

"Please let me say one practical thing. In no cottage is there a possibility of roasting more than a pound of meat, if any; and a piece of roast beef, such as you or I understand by the word, costs ten shillings or twelve, and is not meant for artisans. I never have it in this house now, except when it is full. I have a much sadder example of the changes *wrought* by modern wages and extravagance. Miss ——, who had her house and land for her home-farm expenses (or rather produce), and about —— hundred a year,—who entertained for years all her women and children acquaintances, trained a dozen young servants in a year, and was a blessing to the country for miles round, writes me word yesterday that she hopes and intreats that we will go this summer to Fair-ladies, as it is *the last*. She says the provisions are double the price they used to be—the *wages* also—and she cannot even work her farm as she used to do; the men want beer instead of milk, and won't do half they used to do; so she must give it up, and let the place, and come and live by me or some one

[1] [See Letter 27, § 14 (p. 502).]
[2] ["*Cf.* Letter 1."—*Author's MS. note in his copy.*]
[3] [See *Redgauntlet*, ch. xv.]

to comfort her, and Fair-ladies will know her no more. I am so sorry, because I think it such a loss to the wretched people who drive her away. Our weekly bills are double what they used to be, yet every servant asks higher wages each time I engage one; and as to the poor people in the village, they are not a bit better off—they eat more, and drink more, and learn to think less of religion and all that is good. One thing I see very clearly—that, as the keeping of Sunday is being swept away, so is their day of *rest* going with it. Of course, if no one goes to worship God one day more than another,* what is the sense of talking about the Sabbath? If all the railway servants, and all the post-office, and all the museum and art-collection servants, and all the refreshment places, and other sorts of amusement, servants are to work on Sunday, why on earth should not the artisans, who are as selfish and irreligious as any one? No! directly I find every one else is at work, I shall insist on the baker and the butcher calling for orders as usual. (Quite right, my dear.) The result of enormous wages will be that I rely more on my own boys for carpentering, and on preserved food, and the cook and butcher will soon be dismissed."

7. My poor little darling, rely on your own boys for carpentering by all means; and grease be to their elbows—but you shall have something better to rely on than potted crocodile,[1] in old England, yet,—please the pixies, and pigs, and St. George, and St. Anthony.[2]

Nay, we will have also a blue-aproned butcher or two still, to call for orders; they are not yet extinct. We have not even reached the preparatory phase of steam-butcher-boys, riding from Buxton for orders to Bakewell, and from Bakewell for orders to Buxton;[3] and paying dividends to a Steam-Butcher's-boy-Company. Not extinct yet, and a kindly race, for the most part. "He told me" (part of another friend's letter, speaking of his butcher) "his sow had fourteen pigs, and could only rear twelve, the other two, he said, he was feeding with a spoon. I never could bear, he said, to kill a young animal because he was one too many." Yes; that is all very well when it's a pig; but

* My dear friend, I can't bear to interrupt your pretty letter; but, indeed, one should *not* worship God on one day more, or *less*, than on another; and one should rest when one needs rest, whether on Sunday or Saturday.

[1] [Compare Letter 27, § 15 (p. 503).]
[2] [See above, p. 328.]
[3] [Compare Letter 5, § 9 (p. 86).]

if it be—Wait a minute;—I must go back to Fair-ladies, before I finish my sentence.[1]

8. For note very closely what the actual facts are in this short letter from an English housewife.

She in the south, and the mistress of Fair-ladies in the north, both find "their weekly bills double what they used to be"; that is to say, they are as poor again as they were, and they have to pay higher wages, of course, for now all wages buy so much less. I have too long, perhaps, put questions to you which I knew you could not answer, partly in the hope of at least making you think, and partly because I knew you would not believe the true answer, if I gave it. But, whether you believe me or not, I must explain the meaning of this to you at once. The weekly bills are double, because the greater part of the labour of the people of England is spent unproductively; that is to say, in producing iron plates, iron guns, gunpowder, infernal machines, infernal fortresses floating about, infernal fortresses standing still, infernal means of mischievous locomotion,[2] infernal law-suits, infernal parliamentary elocution, infernal beer, and infernal gazettes, magazines, statues, and pictures. Calculate the labour spent in producing these infernal articles annually, and put against it the labour spent in producing food! The only wonder is, that the weekly bills are not tenfold instead of double. For this poor housewife, mind you, cannot feed her children with any one, or any quantity, of these infernal articles. Children can only be fed with divine articles. Their mother can indeed get to London cheap, but she has no business there; she can buy all the morning's news for a halfpenny, but she has no concern with them; she can see Gustave Doré's pictures[3] (and she had better see the devil) for a shilling; she can be carried through any

[1] [See below, § 9 (p. 536).]

[2] [For Ruskin's justification of this phrase, see Letter 44, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 129).]

[3] [Compare Letter 34, § 8 (p. 630); Vol. XVII. pp. 344–346; and Vol. XIX. p. 212.]

quantity of filthy streets on a tramway for threepence; but it is as much as her life's worth to walk in them, or as her modesty's worth to look into a print shop in them. Nay, let her have but to go on foot a quarter of a mile in the West End, she dares not take her purse in her pocket, nor let her little dog follow her. These are her privileges and facilities, in the capital of civilization. But none of these will bring meat or flour into her own village. Far the contrary! The sheep and corn which the fields of her village produce are carried away from it to feed the makers of Armstrong guns. And her weekly bills are double.

But you, forsooth, you think, with your beer for milk, are better off. Read § 10 of my second letter over again.[1] And now observe farther:—

9. The one first and absolute question of all economy is —What are you making? Are you making Hell's articles, or Heaven's?—gunpowder, or corn?

There is no question whether you are to have work or not. The question is, *what* work. This poor housewife's mutton and corn are given you to eat. Good. Now, if you, with your day's work, produce for her, and send to her, spices, or tea, or rice, or maize, or figs, or any other good thing,—*that* is true and beneficent trade. But if you take her mutton and corn from her, and send her back an Armstrong gun, what can she make of that? But you can't grow figs and spices in England, you say? No, certainly, and therefore means of transit for produce in England are little necessary. Let my poor housewife keep her sheep in her near fields, and do you—keep sheep at Newcastle—and the weekly bills will not rise. But you forge iron at Newcastle; then you build an embankment from Newcastle to my friend's village, whereupon you take her sheep from her, suffocating half of them on the way; and you send her an Armstrong gun back; or, perhaps not even to her, but to somebody who can fire it down your own throats, you jolterheads.

[1] [See above, p. 34.]

No matter, you say, in the meantime, we eat more, and drink more; the housewife herself allows that. Yes, I have just told you, her corn and sheep are all sent to you. But how about other people? I will finish my sentence now, paused in above.[1] It is all very well to bring up creatures with a spoon, when they are one or two too many, if they are useful things, like pigs. But how if they be useless things, like young ladies? You don't want any wives, I understand, now, till you are forty-five;[2] what in the world will you do with your girls? Bring them up with a spoon, to that enchanting age?

10. "The girls may shift for themselves." Yes,—they may, certainly. Here is a picture of some of them, as given by the *Telegraph* of March 18th of the present year, under Lord Derby's new code of civilization, endeavouring to fulfil Mr. John Stuart Mill's wishes, and procure some more lucrative occupation than that of nursing the baby:[3]—

"After all the discussion about woman's sphere and woman's rights, and the advisability of doing something to redress the inequality of position against which the fair sex, by the medium of many champions, so loudly protests and so constantly struggles, it is not satisfactory to be told what happened at Cannon Row two days last week. It had been announced that the Civil Service Commissioners would receive applications personally from candidates for eleven vacancies in the metropolitan post-offices, and in answer to this notice, about 2000 young women made their appearance. The building, the courtyard, and the street were blocked by a dense throng of fair applicants; locomotion was impossible, even with the help of policemen; windows were thrown up to view the sight, as if a procession had been passing that way; traffic was obstructed, and nothing could be done for hours. We understand, indeed, that the published accounts by no means do justice to the scene. Many of the applicants, it appears, were girls of the highest respectability and of unusually good social position, including daughters of clergymen and professional men, well connected, well educated, tenderly nurtured; but nevertheless, driven by the *res angustæ* which have caused many a heart-break, and scattered the members of many a home, to seek for the means of independent support. The crowd, the agitation, the anxiety, the fatigue, proved too much for many of those who attended; several fainted away; others went into violent hysterics; others, despairing of success, remained just long enough to be

[1] [See above, end of § 7.]
[2] [See Letter 28, end of § 19 (p. 521).]
[3] [See Letter 12, § 14 (p. 208).]

utterly worn out, and then crept off, showing such traces of mental anguish as we are accustomed to associate with the most painful bereavements. In the present case, it is stated, the Commissioners examined over 1000 candidates for the eleven vacancies. This seems a sad waste of power on both sides, when, in all probability, the first score supplied the requisite number of qualified aspirants."[1]

11. Yes, my pets, I am tired of talking to these workmen, who never answer a word; I will try *you* now—for a letter or two—but I beg your pardon for calling you pets, —my "qualified aspirants" I mean (Alas! time was when the qualified aspiration was on the bachelor's side). Here you have got all you want, I hope!—liberty enough, it seems—if only the courtyard were bigger; equality enough —no distinction made between young ladies of the highest, or the lowest, respectability; rights of women generally claimed, you perceive; and obtained without opposition from absurdly religious, moral, or chivalric persons. You have got no God, now, to bid you do anything you don't like; no husbands, to insist on having their own way (and much of it they got, in the old times—didn't they?)—no pain nor peril of childbirth;[2]—no bringing up of tiresome brats. Here is an entirely scientific occupation for you! Such a beautiful invention this of Mr. Wheatstone's! and I hope you all understand the relations of positive and negative electricity. Now you may "communicate intelligence" by telegraph. Those wretched girls that used to write love-letters, of which their foolish lovers would count the words, and sometimes be thankful for—less than twenty[3] —how they would envy you if they knew. Only the worst is, that this beautiful invention of Mr. Wheatstone's for talking miles off, won't feed people in the long run, my

[1] [For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 73, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 18).]

[2] [See the final prayer in the Thanksgiving, commonly called The Churching of Women.]

[3] [The charge for an inland telegram was then a shilling for twenty words. "It is in connection with the electric telegraph that the name of Sir Charles Wheatstone (1802–1875) will always live. He was not the 'inventor' of the electric telegraph. Indeed no one can lay claim to that title. But to Wheatstone, with his coadjutor, Sir William Fothergill Cooke, is due the merit of having been the first to render it available for the public transmission of messages (1834–1841)": *Dictionary of National Biography.*]

dears, any more than the old invention of the tongue, for talking near, and you'll soon begin to think that was not so bad a one, after all.[1] But you can't live by talking, though you talk in the scientificalest of manners, and to the other side of the world. All the telegraph wire over the earth and under the sea, will not do so much for you, my poor little qualified aspirants, as one strong needle with thimble and thread.

12. You *do* sometimes read a novel still, don't you, my scientific dears? I wish I could write one; but I can't; and George Eliot always makes them end so wretchedly that they're worse than none[2]—so she's no good, neither. I must even translate a foreign novelette or nouvelette, which is to my purpose, next month;[3] meantime I have chanced on a little true story, in the journal of an Englishman, travelling, before the Revolution, in France,[4] which shows you something of the temper of the poor unscientific girls of that day. Here are first, however, a little picture or two which he gives in the streets of Paris, and which I want all my readers to see; they mark, what most Englishmen do not know, that the beginning of the French Revolution, with what of good or evil it had, was in English, not French, notions of "justice" and "liberty." The writer is travelling with a friend, Mr. B——, who is of the Liberal school, and,

"He and I went this forenoon to a review of the foot-guards, by Marshal Biron. There was a crowd, and we could with difficulty get within the circle, so as to see conveniently. An old officer of high rank touched some people who stood before us, saying, 'Ces deux Messieurs sont des étrangers;' upon which they immediately made way, and allowed us to pass. 'Don't you think that was very obliging?' said I. 'Yes,' answered he; 'but, by heavens, it was very unjust.'

[Compare Letter 5, § 8 (p. 85).]

[For Ruskin's dislike of George Eliot's novels, see Vol. XI. p. 234, and the other passages there noted.]

[3] [See pp. 548 *seq.*]

[4] [John Moore, M.D. (1729–1802), who had travelled on the Continent during the years 1772–1778 in attendance on the Duke of Hamilton. The extract here given is from his *View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland, and Italy, By a Gentleman who resided Several Years in those Countries*, 1789, Letter xi., vol. i. pp. 75–79.]

"We returned by the Boulevards, where crowds of citizens, in their holiday dresses, were making merry; the young dancing cotillons, the old beating time to the music, and applauding the dancers. 'These people seem very happy,' said I. 'Happy!' exclaimed B——; 'if they had common-sense, or reflection, they would be miserable.' 'Why so?' 'Could not the minister,' answered he, 'pick out half-a-dozen of them if he pleased, and clap them into the Bicêtre?'[1] 'That is true, indeed,' said I; 'that is a catastrophe which, to be sure, may very probably happen, and yet I thought no more of it than they.'

"We met, a few days after he arrived, at a French house where we had been both invited to dinner. There was an old lady of quality present, next to whom a young officer was seated, who paid her the utmost attention. He helped her to the dishes she liked, filled her glass with wine or water, and addressed his discourse particularly to her. 'What a fool,' says B——, 'does that young fellow make of the poor old woman! if she were my mother, d—n me, if I would not call him to an account for it.'

"Though B—— understands French, and speaks it better than most Englishmen, he had no relish for the conversation, soon left the company, and has refused all invitations to dinner ever since. He generally finds some of our countrymen, who dine and pass the evening with him at the Parc Royal.

"After the review this day, we continued together, and being both disengaged, I proposed, by way of variety, to dine at the public ordinary of the Hôtel de Bourbon. He did not like this much at first. 'I shall be teased,' says he, 'with their confounded ceremony;' but on my observing that we could not expect much ceremony or politeness at a public ordinary, he agreed to go.

"Our entertainment turned out different, however, from my expectations and his wishes. A marked attention was paid us the moment we entered; everybody seemed inclined to accommodate us with the best places. They helped us first, and all the company seemed ready to sacrifice every convenience and distinction to the strangers; for, next to that of a lady, the most respected character at Paris is that of a stranger.

"After dinner, B—— and I walked into the gardens of the Palais Royal.

"'There was nothing real in all the fuss those people made about us,' says he.

"'I can't help thinking it something,' said I, 'to be treated with civility and apparent kindness in a foreign country, by strangers who know nothing about us, but that we are Englishmen, and often their enemies.'"

18. So much for the behaviour of old Paris. Now for our country story. I will not translate the small bits of French in it; my most entirely English readers can easily find out what they mean, and they must gather what

[1] [The Lunatic Asylum.]

moral they may from it, till next month,[1] for I have no space to comment on it in this letter.

"My friend F—— called on me a few days since, and as soon as he understood that I had no particular engagement, he insisted that I should drive somewhere into the country, dine *tête-à-tête* with him, and return in time for the play.

"When we had driven a few miles, I perceived a genteel-looking young fellow, dressed in an old uniform. He sat under a tree on the grass, at a little distance from the road, and amused himself by playing on the violin. As we came nearer we perceived he had a wooden leg, part of which lay in fragments by his side.

"'What do you do there, soldier?' said the Marquis. 'I am on my way home to my own village, mon officier,' said the soldier. 'But, my poor friend,' resumed the Marquis, 'you will be a furious long time before you arrive at your journey's end, if you have no other carriage besides these,' pointing at the fragments of his wooden leg. 'I wait for my equipage and all my suite,' said the soldier, 'and I am greatly mistaken if I do not see them this moment coming down the hill.'

"We saw a kind of cart, drawn by one horse, in which was a woman, and a peasant who drove the horse. While they drew near, the soldier told us he had been wounded in Corsica—that his leg had been cut off—that before setting out on that expedition, he had been contracted to a young woman in the neighbourhood—that the marriage had been postponed till his return; but when he appeared with a wooden leg, that all the girl's relations had opposed the match. The girl's mother, who was her only surviving parent when he began his courtship, had always been his friend; but she had died while he was abroad. The young woman herself, however, remained constant in her affections, received him with open arms, and had agreed to leave her relations, and accompany him to Paris, from whence they intended to set out in the diligence to the town where he was born, and where his father still lived. That on the way to Paris his wooden leg had snapped, which had obliged his mistress to leave him, and go to the next village in quest of a cart to carry him thither, where he would remain till such time as the carpenter should renew his leg. 'C'est un malheur,' concluded the soldier, 'mon officier, bientôt reparé—et voici mon amie!'

"The girl sprung before the cart, seized the outstretched hand of her lover, and told him, with a smile full of affection, that she had seen an admirable carpenter, who had promised to make a leg that would *not* break, that it would be ready by to-morrow, and they might resume their journey as soon after as they pleased.

"The soldier received his mistress's compliment as it deserved.

"She seemed about twenty years of age, a beautiful, fine-shaped girl—a brunette, whose countenance indicated sentiment and vivacity.

"'You must be much fatigued, my dear,' said the Marquis. 'On ne se fatigue pas, Monsieur, quand on travaille pour ce qu'on aime,' replied

[1] [The moral was not drawn next month, but see the reference in Letter 43, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 114), and compare Letter 40, § 1 (*ibid.*, p. 65).]

the girl. The soldier kissed her hand with a gallant and tender air. . . . 'Allons,' continued the Marquis, addressing himself to me; 'this girl is quite charming—her lover has the appearance of a brave fellow; they have but three legs betwixt them, and we have four;—if you have no objection, they shall have the carriage, and we will follow on foot to the next village, and see what can be done for these lovers.' I never agreed to a proposal with more pleasure in my life.

"The soldier began to make difficulties about entering into the *vis-à-vis*. 'Come, come, friend,' said the Marquis, 'I am a colonel, and it is your duty to obey: get in without more ado, and your mistress shall follow.'

"'Entrons, mon bon ami,' said the girl, 'since these gentlemen insist upon doing us so much honour.'

"'A girl like you would do honour to the finest coach in France. Nothing could please me more than to have it in my power to make you happy,' said the Marquis. 'Laissez-moi faire, mon colonel,' said the soldier. 'Je suis heureuse comme une reine,' said Fanchon. Away moved the chaise, and the Marquis and I followed.

"'Voyez-vous, combien nous sommes heureux, nous autres François, à bon marché,' said the Marquis to me, adding with a smile, 'le bonheur, à ce qu'on m'a dit, est plus cher en Angleterre.' 'But,' answered I, 'how long will this last with these poor people?' 'Ah, pour le coup,' said he, 'voilà une réflexion bien Angloise;—that, indeed, is what I cannot tell; neither do I know how long you or I may live; but I fancy it would be great folly to be sorrowful through life, because we do not know how soon misfortunes may come, and because we are quite certain that death is to come at last.'

"When we arrived at the inn to which we had ordered the postillion to drive, we found the soldier and Fanchon. After having ordered some victuals and wine, 'Pray,' said I to the soldier, 'how do you propose to maintain your wife and yourself?' 'One who has contrived to live for five years on soldier's pay,' replied he, 'can have little difficulty for the rest of his life. I can play tolerably well on the fiddle,' added he, 'and perhaps there is not a village in all France of the size, where there are so many marriages as in that in which we are going to settle; I shall never want employment.' 'And I,' said Fanchon, 'can weave hair nets and silk purses, and mend stockings. Besides, my uncle has two hundred livres of mine in his hands, and although he is brother-in-law to the Bailiff, and *volontiers brutal*, yet I will make him pay it every sous.' 'And I,' said the soldier, 'have fifteen livres in my pocket, besides two louis that I lent to a poor farmer to enable him to pay the taxes, and which he will repay me when he is able.'

"'You see, Sir,' said Fanchon to me, 'that we are not objects of compassion. May we not be happy, my good friend (turning to her lover with a look of exquisite tenderness), if it be not our own fault?' 'If you are not, ma douce amie!'[1] said the soldier with great warmth, 'je serai bien à plaindre.'"[2]

[1] [The title to this Letter.]

[2] [Moore's *View of Society in France*, etc., Letter xv., pp. 112–119. "My friend F——" is the "Marquis of Fontanelle" (see vol. i. p. 17).]

you for your 'good-will to man,' but protest against the levity of your method of dealing with politics.[1]

"You assume that you understand me, and that I don't understand myself or you. I fully admit that I don't understand you or myself, and I declare that neither do you understand me. But I will pass hyper-criticism (and, by-the-by, I am not sure that I know what that compound word means; you will know, of course, for me) and tackle your 'Answers.'

"1. You evade the meaning—the question,—for I cannot think you mean that the 'world,' or an 'ocean,' can be rightfully regarded by legislators as the private property of 'individuals.'

"2. 'It never was, and never can be.' The price of a cocoa-nut was the cost of labour in climbing the tree; the climber ate the nut.

"3. What do *you* understand by a 'tax'? The penny paid for the conveyance of a letter is not a tax. Lord Somebody says I must perish of hunger, or pay him for permission to dig in the land on which I was born. He taxes me that he may live without labouring, and do you say 'of course,' 'quite rightfully'?

"4. ?

"5. You may choose a pig or horse for yourself, but I claim the right of choosing mine, even though you know that you could choose better animals for me. By your system, if logically carried out, we should have no elections, but should have an emperor of the world,—the man who knew himself to be the most intelligent of all. I suppose *you* should be allowed to vote? It is somebody else who must have no political voice? Where do you draw the line? Just below John Ruskin?* Is a man so little and his polish so much? Men and women must vote, or must not submit. I have bought but little of the polish sold at schools; but, ignorant as I am, I would not yield as the 'subject' of thirty million Ruskins, or of the king they might elect without consulting me. You did not let either your brain or your heart speak when you answered that question.

"6. 'Beneficial.' I claim the right of personal judgment, and I would grant the exercise of that right to every man and woman.

"7. 'Untrue.' *Untrue.* Lord Somebody consumes, with the aid of a hundred men and women, whom he keeps from productive industry, as much as would suffice to maintain a hundred families. A hundred—yes, a thousand navvies. 'Destroying'? Did you forget that so many admirals, generals, colonels, and captains, were your law-makers? Are they not professional destroyers? I could fill your pages with a list of other destructive employments of your legislators.

"8. Has the tax-gatherer too busy a time of it to attend to the duties added by the establishment of a National Post Office? We remove a thousand toll-bars, and collect the assessment annually with economy. We eat now, and are poisoned, and pay dearly. The buyers and sellers of bread 'have a busy time of it.'

"9. Thank you for the straightforwardness. But I find you ask me what I mean by a 'State.' I meant it as you accepted it, and did not think it economical to bother you or myself with a page of incomplete definitions.

"10. 'See *Munera Pulveris!*' And, ye 'workmen and labourers,' go and consult the Emperor of China.

"You speak of a king who killed 'without wrath, and without doubting his rightness,' and of a collier who killed with 'consciousness.' Glorious, ignorant brute of a king! Degraded, enlightened collier! It is enough to stimulate a patriot to burn all the colleges and libraries. Much learning makes us ignoble! No! it is the much labour and the bad teaching of the labourer by those who never earned their food by the sweat of their own brow."

* My correspondent will perhaps be surprised to hear that I have never in my life voted for any candidate for Parliament, and that I never mean to.[2]

[1] [Compare, above, p. 362. In his own copy Ruskin here wrote, "People could not generally see the drift; it is all too fine run and the mocking too quiet." Compare the Introduction, p. xxxii.]

[2] [See, further, the MS. passage just referred to.]

## LETTER 80

### THE CART THAT WENT OF ITSELF[1]

BRANTWOOD, *April* 19, 1873

1. ON the thirteenth shelf of the south bookcase of my home-library, stand, first, Kenelm Digby's *Broad Stone of Honour*,[2] then in five volumes, bound in red, the *History of the Ingenious Gentleman, Don Quixote of La Mancha;* and then, in one volume, bound in green, a story no less pathetic, called the *Mirror of Peasants*.[3]

Its author does not mean the word "mirror" to be understood in the sense in which one would call Don Quixote the "Mirror of Chivalry"; but in that of a glass in which a man—beholding his natural heart—may know also the hearts of other men, as, in a glass, face answers to face.[4]

The author of this story was a clergyman; but employed the greater part of his day in writing novels, having a gift for that species of composition as well as for sermons, and observing, though he gave both excellent in their kind, that his congregation liked their sermons to be short, and his readers, their novels to be long.

2. Among them, however, were also many tiny novelettes, of which, young ladies, I to-day begin translating for you one of the shortest; hoping that you will not think the worse of it for being written by a clergyman. Of this author I will only say, that, though I am not prejudiced in favour of persons of his profession, I think him the wisest

[1] [See § 5.]

[2] [For another reference to this book, see Vol. VII. p. 361.]

[3] [*Der Bauernspiegel, oder Lebensgeschichte des Jeremias Gotthelf* was first published in 1836; it is printed in vol. i. of his *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin, 1856). A full life of Bitzius is prefixed to this collection. Ruskin used the French translation, *Le Miroir des Paysans* (Berne, 1854). For other references to Jeremias Gotthelf (the pen-name of Albert Bitzius, 1797–1855), see Vol. VI. p. 172, and Vol. VII. p. 430.]

[4] [See James i. 23.]

man, take him for all in all,[1] with whose writings I am acquainted; chiefly because he showed his wisdom in pleasant and unappalling ways; as, for instance, by keeping, for the chief ornament of his study (not being able to afford expensive books), one book beautifully bound, and shining with magnificence of golden embossing; this book of books being his register, out of which he read, from the height of his pulpit, the promises of marriage.[2] "Dans lequel il lisait, du haut de la chaire, les promesses de mariage."[3]

He rose always early; breakfasted himself at six o'clock; and then got ready with his own hands the family breakfast, liking his servants better to be at work out of doors: wrote till eleven, dined at twelve, and spent the afternoon in his parish work, or in his fields, being a farmer of shrewdest and most practical skill; and through the Sundays of fifteen years, never once was absent from his pulpit.

8. And now, before I begin my little story, which is a translation of a translation, for the original is German, and I can only read French, I must say a few serious words as to the sense in which I wish you to receive what religious instruction this romantic clergyman may sometimes mingle with his romance. He is an Evangelical divine of the purest type. It is therefore primarily for my Evangelical readers that I translate this or others of his tales; and if they have read either former letters of *Fors*, or any of my later books, they must know that I do not myself believe in Evangelical theology.[4] But I shall, with my best care, represent and enforce this clergyman's teaching to my said Evangelical readers, exactly as I should feel it my duty, if I were talking to a faithful Turk, to represent and enforce to him any passage of the Koran which was beyond all

[1] [*Hamlet*, Act i. sc. 2.]

[2] [Compare "Notes on the Priest's Office" in *Roadside Songs of Tuscany*.]

[3] [See p. 30 of the biographical notice prefixed to the following work: *Jeremias Gotthelf: Œuvres Choisies, Traduites avec une notice Biographique, par Max Buchon. Les Joies et Les Souffrances d'un Maître d'École. Tome premier. Neuchatel et Paris*: 1857.]

[4] [See, for instance, above, p. 493; and compare, below, p. 673. See also Vol. XXVIII. pp. 70, 259, 366, and Vol. XXIX. p. 92. For passages to the same effect in other of Ruskin's later books, see the Preface of 1871 to *Sesame and Lilies*, Vol. XVIII. p. 31; and *Præterita*, iii. § 23.]

question true, in its reference to practical life; and with the bearings of which I was more familiar than he. For I think that our common prayer that God "would take away all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of His word, from all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics,"[1] is an entirely absurd one. I do not think all Jews have hard hearts; nor that all infidels would despise God's word, if only they could hear it; nor do I in the least know whether it is my neighbour or myself who is really the heretic. But I pray that prayer for myself as well as others; and in this form, that God would make all Jews honest Jews, all Turks honest Turks, all infidels honest infidels, and all Evangelicals and heretics honest Evangelicals and heretics;[2] that so these Israelites in whom there is no guile,[3] Turks in whom there is no guile, and so on, may in due time see the face, and know the power, of the King alike of Israel and Esau. Now, therefore, young ladies, I beg you to understand that I entirely sympathize with this Evangelical clergyman's feelings because I know him to be honest: also, that I give you of his teaching what is universally true: and that you may get the more good from his story, I will ask you first to consider with yourselves what St. James means by saying in the ninth verse of his general Epistle, "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, but the rich in that he is made low";[4] and if you find, as you generally will, if you think seriously over any verse of your Bibles whatsoever, that you never have had, and are never likely to have, the slightest idea what it means, perhaps you will permit me to propose the following explanation to you. That while both rich and poor are to be content to remain in their several states, gaining only by the due and natural bettering of an honest man's settled life; if, nevertheless, any chance should occur to cause sudden difference in either

[1] [Third Collect for Good Friday.]

[2] [Compare, above, p. 466; Letters 37, § 6; 41, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 19, 79); and 86, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 337–338). See also *Ethics of the Dust*, § 118 (Vol. XVIII. p. 356); and *Præterita*, ii. § 110.]

[3] [Compare John i. 47.]

[4] [James i. 9, 10.]

of their positions, the poor man might wisely desire that it should be some relief from the immediate pressure of poverty, while the rich should esteem it the surest sign of God's favour, if, without fault of his own, he were forced to know the pain of a lower condition.

4. I have noticed, in *Sesame and Lilies*, § 2, the frantic fear of the ordinary British public, lest they should fall below their proper "station in life."[1] It appears that almost the only real sense of duty remaining now in the British conscience is a passionate belief in the propriety of keeping up an appearance; no matter if on other people's money, so only that there be no signs of their coming down in the world.

I should be very glad therefore if any of my young lady readers, who consider themselves religious persons, would inform me whether they are satisfied with my interpretation of the text; and if so, then how far they would consent, without complaining, to let God humble them, if He wished to? If, for instance, they would, without pouting, allow Him to have His way, even to the point of forcing them to gain their bread by some menial service,—as, suppose, a housemaid's; and whether they would feel aggrieved at being made lower housemaid instead of upper.

5. If they have read their Bible to so good purpose as not to care which, I hope the following story may not be thought wholly beneath their attention; concerning, as it does, the housemaid's principal implement; or what (supposing her a member of St. George's Company) we may properly call her spear, or weapon of noble war.

## THE BROOM MERCHANT[2]

Brooms are, as we know, among the imperious necessities of the epoch; and in every household, there are many needful articles of the kind which must be provided from day to day, or week to week; and which

[1] [See Vol. XVIII. p. 54.]

[2] [*Der Besenbinder von Rychiswyl*, first published in 1852; vol. ix., pp. 343-374 of the *Gesammelte Schriften*. The story ("Le Marchand de Balais") is the first (pp. 1–36) in the *Nouvelles Bernoises, traduites par Max. Buchon, Première Série*, 1854. Ruskin omits some introductory passages, and here (§ 5) translates pp. 343-351.]

one accordingly finds, everywhere, persons glad to supply. But we pay daily less and less attention to these kindly disposed persons, since we have been able to get the articles at their lowest possible price.

Formerly it was not thus. The broom merchant, the egg merchant, the sand and rottenstone merchant, were, so to speak, part of the family; one was connected with them by very close links; one knew the day on which each would arrive; and according to the degree of favour they were in, one kept something nice for their dinner; and if, by any chance, they did not come to their day, they excused themselves, next time, as for a very grave fault indeed. They considered the houses which they supplied regularly, as the stars of their heaven,—took all the pains in the world to serve them well,—and, on quitting their trade for anything more dignified, did all they could to be replaced either by their children, or by some cousin, or cousine. There was thus a reciprocal bond of fidelity on one side, and of trust on the other, which unhappily relaxes itself more and more every day, in the measure that also family spirit disappears.

The broom merchant of Rychiswyl was a servant of this sort; he whom one regrets now, so often at Berne,—whom everybody was so fond of at Thun! The Saturday might sooner have been left out of the almanack, than the broom-man not appear in Thun on the Saturday. He had not always been the broom-man; for a long time he had only been the broom-boy; until, in the end, the boy had boys of his own, who put themselves to push his cart for him. His father, who had been a soldier, died early in life; the lad was then very young, and his mother ailing. His elder sister had started in life many a day before, barefoot, and had found a place in helping a woman who carried pine-cones and turpentine to Berne. When she had won her spurs, that is to say, shoes and stockings, she obtained advancement, and became a governess of poultry, in a large farm near the town. Her mother and brother were greatly proud of her, and never spoke but with respect of their pretty Babeli. Hansli could not leave his mother, who had need of his help, to fetch her wood, and the like. They lived on the love of God and good people; but badly enough. One day, the farmer they lodged with says to Hansli:

My lad, it seems to me you might try and earn something now; you are big enough, and sharp enough.

I wish I could, said Hansli; but I don't know how.

I know something you could do, said the farmer. Set to work to make brooms; there are plenty of twigs on my willows. I only get them stolen as it is; so they shall not cost you much. You shall make me two brooms a year of them.*

Yes, that would be very fine and good, said Hansli; but where shall I learn to make brooms?

Pardieu,† there's no such sorcery in the matter, said the farmer. I'll take on me the teaching of you; many a year now I've made all the brooms

* Far wiser than letting him gather them as valueless.

† Not translatable. In French, it has the form of a passionate oath, but the spirit of a gentle one.[1]

[1] ["Pardieu" is an interpolation in the French translation.]

we use on the farm myself, and I'll back myself to make as good as are made;* you'll want few tools, and may use mine at first.

All which was accordingly done; and God's blessing came on the doing of it. Hansli took a fancy to the work; and the farmer was enchanted with Hansli.

Don't look so close;† put all in that is needful, do the thing well, so as to show people they may put confidence in you. Once get their trust, and your business is done, said always the farmer,‡ and Hansli obeyed him.

In the beginning, naturally, things did not go very fast, nevertheless he placed§ what he could make; and as he became quicker in the making, the sale increased in proportion. Soon, everybody said that no one had such pretty brooms as the little merchant of Rychiswyl; and the better he succeeded, the harder he worked. His mother visibly recovered liking for life. Now the battle's won, said she; as soon as one can gain one's bread honourably, one has the right to enjoy oneself, and what can one want more! Always, from that time, she had, every day, as much as she liked to eat; nay, even every day there remained something over for the next: and she could have as much bread as she liked. Indeed, Hansli very often brought her even a little white bread back from the town, whereupon‖ how happy did she not feel herself! and how she thanked God for having kept so many good things for her old days.

On the contrary, now for a little while, Hansli was looking cross and provoked. Soon he began actually to grumble. "Things could not go on much longer that way; he could not put up with it." When the farmer at last set himself to find out what that meant, Hansli declared to him that he had too many brooms to carry, and could not carry them; and that even when the miller took them on his cart, it was very inconvenient, and that he absolutely wanted a cart of his own, but he hadn't any money to buy one, and didn't know anybody who was likely to lend him any. You are a gaby,¶ said the peasant. Look you, I won't have you become one of those people who think a thing's done as soon as they've dreamt it. That's the way one spends one's money to make the fish go into other

* Head of house doing all he can do *well*, himself. If he had not had time to make the brooms well, he would have bought them.

† Do not calculate so closely how much you can afford to give for the price.

‡ Not meaning "you can cheat them afterwards," but that the customer would not leave him for another broom-maker.

§ Sold.

‖ "Aussi," *also* how happy she felt. Aussi is untranslatable in this pretty use; so hereafter I shall put it, as an English word, in its place.[1]

¶ "Nigaud," good for nothing but trifles; worthless, but without sense of vice (vaut-rien, means viciously worthless). The real sense of this word here would be "Handless fool," but said good-humouredly.[2]

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[1] [See, for instance, p. 552.]

[2] [The German original is "Ein dummer Bub."]

people's nets. You want to buy a cart, do you? why don't you make one yourself?

Hansli put himself,* to stare at the farmer with his mouth open, and great eyes.

Yes, make it yourself: you will manage it, if you make up your mind, went on the farmer. You can chip wood well enough, and the wood won't cost you much—what I haven't, another peasant will have; and there must be old iron about, plenty, in the lumber-room. I believe there's even an old cart somewhere, which you can have to look at—or to use, if you like. Winter will be here soon; set yourself to work, and by the spring all will be done, and you won't have spent a threepenny piece,† for you may pay the smith too, with brooms, or find a way of doing without him—who knows?

Hansli began to open his eyes again. I make a cart,—but how ever shall I,—I never made one. Gaby, answered the farmer, one must make everything once the first time. Take courage, and it's half done. If people took courage solidly, there are many now carrying the beggar's wallet, who would have money up to their ears, and good metal, too. Hansli was on the point of asking if the peasant had lost his head. Nevertheless, he finished by biting at the notion; and entering into it little by little, as a child into cold water. The peasant came now and then to help him; and in spring the new cart was ready, in such sort that on Easter Tuesday Hansli conducted it,‡ for the first time, to Berne, and the following Saturday to Thun, also for the first time. The joy and pride that this new cart gave him, it is difficult to form anything like a notion of. If anybody had proposed to give him the Easter ox for it, that they had promenaded at Berne the evening before, and which weighed well its twenty-five quintals, he wouldn't have heard of such a thing. It seemed to him that everybody stopped as they passed, to look at his cart; and, whenever he got a chance, he put himself to explain at length what advantages that cart had over every other cart that had yet been seen in the world. He asserted very gravely that it went of itself,[1] except only at the hills; where it was necessary to give it a touch of the hand.§ A cookmaid said to him that she would not have thought him so clever; and that if ever she

* Se mit à regarder. I shall always translate such passages with the literal idiom—put himself.

† A single batz,[2] about three halfpence in bad silver, flat struck: I shall use the word without translating henceforward.[3]

‡ Pushed it.[4] No horse wanted.

§ Coup de main, a nice French idiom meaning the stroke of hand as opposed by that of a senseless instrument.[5] The phrase "Taking a place by a coup de main" regards essentially not so much the mere difference between sudden and long assault, as between assault with flesh or cannon.

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[1] [The title to this *Fors* is here indicated.]
[2] [In the original, "nicht manchen Batzen."]
[3] [As on p. 553, and in Letter 44, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 129).]
[4] [In the original, "*zog.*"]
[5] [In the German, simply "nachhelfen."]

wanted a cart, she would give him her custom. That cookmaid, always, afterwards, when she bought a fresh supply of brooms, had a present of two little ones into the bargain, to sweep into the corners of the hearth with; things which are very convenient for maids who like to have everything clean even into the corners; and who always wash their cheeks to behind their ears. It is true that maids of this sort are thin-sprinkled enough.*

From this moment, Hansli began to take good heart to his work: his cart was for him his farm;† he worked with real joy; and joy in getting anything done is, compared to ill-humour, what a sharp hatchet is to a rusty one, in cutting wood. The farmers of Rychiswyl were delighted with the boy. There wasn't one of them who didn't say, "When you want twigs, you've only to take them in my field; but don't damage the trees, and think of the wife sometimes; women use so many brooms in a year that the devil couldn't serve them." Hansli did not fail; also was he in great favour with all the farm-mistresses. They never had been in the way of setting any money aside for buying brooms; they ordered their husbands to provide them,‡ but one knows how things go, that way. Men are often too lazy to make shavings,§ how much less brooms! —aussi the women were often in a perfect famine of brooms, and the peace of the household had greatly to suffer for it. But now, Hansli was there before one had time to think; and it was very seldom a paysanne‖ was obliged to say to him, "Hansli, don't forget us, we're at our last broom." Besides the convenience of this, Hansli's brooms were superb—very different from the wretched things which one's grumbling husband tied up loose, or as rough and ragged as if they had been made of oat straw. Of course, in these houses, Hansli gave his brooms for nothing; yet they were not the worst placed pieces of his stock; for, not to speak of the twigs given him gratis, all the year round he was continually getting little presents, in bread and milk, and such kind of things, which a paysanne has always under her hand, and which she gives without looking too close. Also, rarely one churned butter without saying to him, Hansli,

* Assez clair semées.[1]

† He is now a capitalist, in the entirely wholesome and proper sense of the word. See answer of *Pall Mall Gazette*, driven to have recourse to the simple truth, to my third question in last *Fors*.[2]

‡ See above, the first speech of the farmer to Hansli, "Many's the year now," etc. It would be a shame for a well-to-do farmer to have to buy brooms; it is only the wretched townspeople whom Hansli counts on for custom.

§ Copeaux, I don't understand this.[3]

‖ The mistress of a farm; paysan, the master. I shall use paysanne, after this, without translation, and peasant, for paysan; rarely wanting the word in our general sense.

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[1] [In the German, "so gar häufig sind die aber nicht."]

[2] [Not *last Fors*, but Letter 28, § 22 (p. 525).]

[3] [In the German, "nun weiss man, wie das geht, ist dasselbe ja oft zu faul zum Holzspalten, geschweige denn zum Besenmachen."]

we beat butter to-morrow; if you like to bring a pot, you shall have some of the beaten.*

And as for fruit, he had more than he could eat of it; so that it could not fail, things going on in this way, that Hansli should prosper; being besides thoroughly economical. If he spent as much as a batz on the day he went to the town, it was the end of the world.† In the morning, his mother took care he had a good breakfast, after which he took also something in his pocket, without counting that sometimes here, and sometimes there, one gave him a morsel in the kitchens where he was well known; and finally he didn't imagine that he ought always to have something to eat, the moment he had a mind to it.[1]

6. I am very sorry, but find there's no chance of my getting the romantic part of my story rightly into this letter; so I must even leave it till August, for my sketch of Scott's early life is promised for July,[2] and I must keep my word to time more accurately than hitherto, else, as the letters increase in number, it is too probable I may forget what I promised in them; not that I lose sight even for a moment of my main purpose; but the contents of the letters being absolutely as the Third Fors may order, she orders me here and there so fast sometimes that I can't hold the pace. This unlucky index, for example! It is easy enough to make an index, as it is to make a broom of odds and ends, as rough as oat straw; but to make an index tied up tight, and that will sweep well into corners, isn't so easy. Ill-tied or well, it shall positively be sent with the July number[3] (if I keep my health), and will be only six months late then; so that it will have been finished in about a fourth of the time a lawyer would

* "Du battu," I don't know if it means the butter, or the buttermilk.[4]

† "Le bout du monde," meaning, he never thought of going any farther.[5]

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[1] [For continuation, see Letter 34, § 10 (p. 632).]

[2] [Letter 31. The promise was made above, p. 531.]

[3] [See pp. 437, 505, 568.]

[4] [In his copy Ruskin noted that "buttermilk" is the meaning. The German is "Ankenmilch," *Anke* being a Swiss dialect-word for butter (anken, to make butter): see Staub and Tobler's *Schweizerisches Idiotikon*, 1881.]

[5] [In the German, "so war es viel."]

have taken to provide any document for which there was a pressing necessity.

7. In the meantime, compare the picture of country life in Switzerland, already beginning to show itself in outline in our story of the broom-maker, with this following account of the changes produced by recent trade in the country life of the island of Jersey. It is given me by the correspondent who directed me to Professor Kirk's book (see the notes in last letter[1]), and is in every point of view of the highest value. Compare especially the operations of the great universal law of supply and demand in the article of fruit, as they affect the broom-boy, and my correspondent; and consider for yourselves, how far that beautiful law may affect, in time to come, not *your* pippins only, but also your cheese; and even at last your bread.

I give this letter large print; it is quite as important as anything I have myself to say. The italics are mine.

"MONT À L'ABBÉ, JERSEY, *April* 17, 1873.

"DEAR MASTER,—The lesson I have gathered here in Jersey as to the practical working of bodies of small land-owners, is that they have three arch-enemies to their life and well-being. First, the covetousness that, for the sake of money-increase, permits and seeks that great cities should drain the island of its life-blood—their best men and their best food or means of food; secondly, love of strong drink and tobacco; *and* thirdly (for these two last are closely connected), want of true recreation.

"The island is cut up into small properties or holdings, a very much larger proportion of these being occupied and cultivated by the owners themselves than is the case in England. Consequently, as I think, the poor do not suffer as much as in England. Still the times have altered greatly for the worse within the memory of every

[1] [See Letter 29, § 14 (p. 542).]

middle-aged resident, and the change has been wrought chiefly *by the regular and frequent communication* with London and Paris, but more especially the first, which *in the matter of luxuries of the table, has a maw insatiable.** Thus the Jersey farmer finds that, by devoting his best labour and land to the raising of potatoes sufficiently early to obtain a fancy price for them, very large money-gains are sometimes obtained,—subject also to large risks; for spring frosts on the one hand, and being outstripped by more venturous farmers on the other, are the Jersey farmers' Scylla and Charybdis.

"Now for the results. Land, especially that with southern aspect, has increased marvellously in price. Wages have also risen. In many employments nearly doubled. Twenty years ago a carpenter obtained 1s. 8d. per day. Now he gets 8s.; and field labourers' wages have risen nearly as much in proportion. *But* food and lodging have *much more* than doubled. Potatoes for ordinary consumption are now from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. per cabot (40 lb.); here I put out of court the early potatoes, which bring, to those who are fortunate in the race, three times that price. Fifteen years ago the regular price for the same quantity was from 5d. to 8d. Butter is now 1s. 4d. per lb. Then it was 6d.; and milk of course has altered in the same proportion. *Fruit, which formerly could be had in lavish, nay almost fabulous abundance, is now dearer than in London.* In fact I, who am essentially a frugivorous animal, have found myself unable to indulge in it, and it is only at very rare intervals to be found in any shape at my table. All work harder, and all fare worse; but *the poor especially so.* The well-to-do possess a secret solace denied to them. It is found in the 'share market.' I am told by one employed in a banking-house and 'finance' business here, that it is quite wonderful how fond the Jersey farmers are

* Compare, if you can get at the book in any library, my article on "Home, and its Economies" in the *Contemporary Review* for May [1873: see now Vol. XVII. pp. 556–565.]

of Turkish bonds, Grecian and Spanish coupons. Shares in mines seem also to find favour here. My friend in the banking-house tells me that he was once induced to try his fortune in that way. To be cautious, he invested in four different mines. It was perhaps fortunate for him that he never received a penny of his money back from any one of the four.

"Another mode by which the earnings of the saving and industrious Jerseyman find their way back to London or Paris is the uncalculated, but not unfrequent, advent of a spendthrift among the heirs of the family. I am told that the landlord of the house I live in is of this stamp, and that two years more of the same rate of expenditure at Paris that he now uses, will bring him to the end of his patrimony.

"But what of the stimulants, and the want of recreation? I have coupled these together because I think that drinking is an attempt to find, by a short and easy way, the reward of a true recreation; to supply a coarse goad to the wits, so that there may be forced or fancied increase of play to the imagination, and to experience, with this, an agreeable physical sensation. I think men will usually drink to get the fascinating combination of the two. True recreation is the cure, and this is not adequately supplied here, either in kind or degree, by tea-meetings and the various religious 'services,' which are almost the only social recreations (no irreverence intended by thus classing them) in use among the country folk of Jersey.

"But I had better keep to my facts. The deductions I can well leave to my master.

"Here is a fact as to the working of the modern finance system here. There is exceedingly little gold coin in the island; in place thereof we use one-pound notes issued by the banks of the island. *The principal bank issuing these, and also possessing by far the largest list of depositors, has just failed. Liabilities, as estimated by the accountants, not less than £332,000; assets calculated by the same authorities*

*not exceeding £34,000.*[1] The whole island is thrown into the same sort of catastrophe as English merchants by the Overend-Gurney failure. Business in the town nearly at a stand-still, and failures of tradesmen taking place one after another, with a large reserve of the same in prospect. But as the country people are as hard at work as ever, and the panic among the islanders has hindered in nowise the shooting of the blades through the earth, and general bursting forth of buds on the trees, I begin to think the island may survive to find some other chasm for their accumulations. Unless indeed the champion slays the dragon first. (As far as one of the unlearned may have an opinion, I strongly object both to 'Rough skin,' and 'Red skin,' as name derivations.[2] There have been useful words derived from two sources, and I shall hold that the Latin prefix to the Saxon *kin* establishes a sort of relationship with St. George.)"

8. I am greatly flattered by my correspondent's philological studies; but alas, his pretty result is untenable: no derivation can stand astride on two languages; also, neither he, nor any of my readers, must think of me as setting myself up either for a champion or a leader. If they will look back to the first letter of this book, they will find it is expressly written to quit myself of public responsibility in pursuing my private work. Its purpose is to state clearly what must be done by all of us, as we can, in our place; and to fulfil what duty I personally acknowledge to the State; also I have promised, if I live, to show some example of what I know to be necessary, if no more able person will show it first. That is a very different thing from pretending to leadership in a movement which must one day be as wide as the world. Nay, even my marching

[1] [The Mercantile Union Bank. A proposal was made in the Jersey States that a lottery should be sanctioned in aid of the shareholders (*Times*, April 8, May 28, 1873).]

[2] [See Letter 24, § 1 (p. 417).]

days may perhaps soon be over, and the best that I can make of myself be a faithful sign-post. But what I am, or what I fail to be, is of no moment to the cause. The two facts which I have to teach, or sign, though alone, as it seems, at present, in the signature, that food can only be got out of the ground, and happiness only out of honesty, are not altogether dependent on any one's championship, for recognition among mankind.

9. For the present, nevertheless, these two important pieces of information are never, so far as I am aware, presented in any scheme of education either to the infantine or adult mind. And, unluckily, no other information whatever, without acquaintance with these facts, can produce either bread and butter, or felicity. I take the following four questions, for instance, as sufficiently characteristic, out of the seventy-eight, proposed, on their Fifth subject of study, to the children of St. Matthias'[1] National School, Granby Street, Bethnal Green (school fees, twopence or threepence a week), by way of enabling them to pass their First of May pleasantly, in this blessed year 1878.

1. Explain the distinction between an identity and an equation, and give an easy example of each. Show that if a simple equation *in* $x$ is satisfied by two different values of $x$, it is an identity.
2. In what time will a sum of money double itself if invested at 10 per cent. per annum, compound interest?
3. How many different permutations can be made of the letters in the word *Chillianwallah*? How many if arranged in a circle, instead of a straight line? And how many different combinations of them, two and two, can be made?
4. Show that if $\alpha$ and $\beta$ be constant, and $\phi$ and $\lambda$ variable, and if

$$\frac{\cos^2\alpha\cos^2\beta\,(\tan^2\alpha\cos^2\lambda+\tan^2\beta\sin^2\lambda)}{\tan^2\alpha\cos^2\beta\cos^2\lambda+\tan^2\beta\cos^2\alpha\sin^2\lambda} = \frac{\sin^2\alpha\cos^2\phi+\sin\beta\sin^2\phi}{\tan^2\alpha\cos^2\phi+\tan^2\beta\sin^2\phi},$$

then $\cos^2\beta\tan\phi=\cos^2\alpha\tan^2\lambda$, unless $\alpha=\beta+n\pi$.

[1] [For a correction of this statement, see Letter 32, § 26 (p. 603). Mr. Faunthorpe in his Index to *Fors Clavigera* (*s.* "Examination") makes a further correction: "Note.—Not for children, but *Third Stage* Mathematics."]

I am bound to state that I could not answer any one of these interrogations myself, and that my readers must therefore allow for the bias of envy in the expression of my belief that to have been able to answer the sort of questions which the First of May once used to propose to English children,—whether they knew a cowslip from an oxlip, and a blackthorn from a white,—would have been incomparably more to the purpose, both of getting their living, and liking it.

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

10. THE following expression of the wounded feelings of the *Daily News*[1] is perhaps worth preserving:—

"Mr. Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera* has already become so notorious as a curious magazine of the blunders of a man of genius who has travelled out of his province, that it is perhaps hardly worth while to notice any fresh blunder. No one who writes on financial subjects need be at all surprised that Mr. Ruskin funnily misinterprets what he has said, and we have ourselves just been the victim of a misinterpretation of the sort. Mr. Ruskin quotes a single sentence from an article which appeared in our impression of the 3rd of March, and places on it the interpretation that 'whenever you have reason to think that anybody has charged you threepence for a twopenny article, remember that, according to the *Daily News*, the real capital of the community is increased.'[2] We need hardly tell our readers that we wrote no nonsense of that kind. Our object was to show that the most important effect of the high price of coal was to alter the distribution of the proceeds of production in the community, and not to diminish the amount of it; that it was quite possible for real production, which is always the most important matter in a question of material wealth, to increase, even with coal at a high price; and that there was such an increase at the time we were writing, although coal was dear. These are certainly very different propositions from the curious deduction which Mr. Ruskin makes from a single short sentence in a long article, the purport of which was clear enough. There is certainly no cause for astonishment at the blunders which Mr. Ruskin makes in political economy and finance, if his method is to rush at conclusions without patiently studying the drift of what he reads. Oddly enough, it may be added, there is one way in which dear coal *may* increase the capital of a country like England, though Mr. Ruskin seems to think the thing impossible. We are exporters of coal, and of course the higher the price the more the foreigner has to pay for it. So far, therefore, the increased price is advantageous, although on balance, every one knows, it is better to have cheap coal than dear."

11. Let me at once assure the Editor of the *Daily News* that I meant him no disrespect in choosing a "long" article for animadversion. I had imagined that the length of his articles was owing rather to his sense of the importance of their subject than to the impulsiveness and rash splendour of his writing. I feel, indeed, how much the consolation it conveys is enhanced by this fervid eloquence; and even when I had my pocket picked the other day on Tower Hill, it might have soothed my ruffled temper to reflect that, in the beautiful language of the *Daily News*, the most important effect of that operation was "to alter the distribution of the proceeds of production in the community, and not to diminish the

[1] [May 2, 1873.]
[2] [See Letter 29, § 2 (p. 528).]

amount of it." But the Editor ought surely
pointing out that, in his present state of mind, l
mistake in a long letter, but two in a short o
the *Daily News* (if I would but have taken the
efforts), "was to show that it was quite possil
increase, even with coal at a high price." It is
duction of newspaper articles to increase, and c
things. The speculative public probably knew,
*Daily News*, that they might still catch a herri
broil it. But the rise of price in coal itself
diminution of its production, or by roguery.

Again, the intelligent journal observes that "
capital of a country like England, because we
the higher the price, the more the foreigner ha
exporters of many other articles besides coal, an
to be so foolish, finding the prices rise, as, instea
for them," never to buy them. The *Daily Ne*
impression that over, instead of under, selling,
competition in foreign markets, which is not a r
circles.

I observe that the *Daily News*, referring with
which unexpectedly, though incontrovertibly, re
astic statement, declare they need hardly tell the
nonsense of that kind." But I cannot but feel,
considered effusion, that it would be perhaps w
their readers how many other kinds of nonsen
justified in expecting.

## LETTER 31[1]

### WAT OF HARDEN

1. Of the four great English tale-tellers whose dynasties have set or risen within my own memory—Miss Edgeworth, Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray[2]—I find myself greatly at pause in conjecturing, however dimly, what essential good has been effected by them, though they all had the best intentions. Of the essential mischief done by them, there is, unhappily, no doubt whatever. Miss Edgeworth made her morality so impertinent that, since her time, it has only been with fear and trembling that any good novelist has ventured to show the slightest bias in favour of the Ten Commandments. Scott made his romance so ridiculous, that, since his day, one can't help fancying helmets were always pasteboard, and horses were always hobby. Dickens made everybody laugh, or cry, so that they could not go about their business till they had got their faces in wrinkles; and Thackeray settled like a meat-fly on whatever one had got for dinner, and made one sick of it.

That, on the other hand, at least Miss Edgeworth and Scott have indeed some inevitable influence for good, I am the more disposed to think, because nobody now will read them.[3] Dickens is said to have made people good-natured. If he did

[1] [The portrait of Scott (Plate XIII.) is from a slight pencil sketch by Sir F. Chantrey. It is inscribed "Sir Walter Scott, Bart., 19th April, 1820. F. Chantrey." The sketch must have been made during Scott's sittings to the sculptor for the marble bust, presented to the poet (of which the Duke of Wellington had a replica). This pencil sketch was presented to the Oxford University Galleries by Ruskin's friend, Henry Willett, of Brighton. For a reference to the likeness, see Letter 32, § 23 (p. 602).]

[2] [For other passages in which Ruskin criticises the "morality" of Miss Edgeworth, see *Ethics of the Dust*, §§ 78, 79 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 299, 300), and *Proserpina*, i. ch. vi. § 1 (Vol. XXV. p. 282); and compare Letter 47, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 192). For his view of Thackeray, see Vol. XVIII. p. 130 *n.*]

[3] [For a criticism of this statement, so far as it relates to Scott, see Letter 32, § 23 (p. 602).]

WALTER of the BORDER-LAND.

Facsimile of Chantrey's sketch from life

I wonder what sort of natures they had before! Thackeray is similarly asserted to have chastised and repressed flunkeydom,—which it greatly puzzles me to hear, because, as far as I can see, there isn't a carriage now left in all the Row with anybody sitting inside it: the people who ought to have been in it are, every one, hanging on behind the carriage in front.

2. What good these writers have done, is therefore, to me, I repeat, extremely doubtful. But what good Scott has in him to do, I find no words full enough to tell. His ideal of honour in men and women is inbred, indisputable;[1] fresh as the air of his mountains; firm as their rocks. His conception of purity in woman is even higher than Dante's; his reverence for the filial relation, as deep as Virgil's; his sympathy universal;—there is no rank or condition of men of which he has not shown the loveliest aspect; his code of moral principle is entirely defined, yet taught with a reserved subtlety like Nature's own, so that none but the most earnest readers perceive the intention: and his opinions on all practical subjects are final; the consummate decisions of accurate and inevitable common-sense, tempered by the most graceful kindness.

3. That he had the one weakness—I will not call it fault—of desiring to possess more and more of the actual soil of the land which was so rich to his imagination, and so dear to his pride; and that, by this postern-gate of idolatry, entered other taints of folly and fault, punished by supreme misery, and atoned for by a generosity and solemn courage more admirable than the unsullied wisdom of his happier days, I have ceased to lament: for all these things make him only the more perfect to us as an example, because he is not exempt from common failings, and has his appointed portion in common pain.

4. I said we were to learn from him the true relations of Master and Servant;[2] and learning these, there is little left for us to learn; but, on every subject of immediate

[1] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 59 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 115, 116).]
[2] [Letter 29, § 5 (p. 531).]

and vital interest to us, we shall find, as we study his life and words, that both are as authoritative as they are clear. Of his impartiality of judgment, I think it is enough, once for all, to bid you observe that, though himself, by all inherited disposition and accidental circumstances, prejudiced in favour of the Stuart cause, the aristocratic character, and the Catholic religion,—the only perfectly noble character in his first novel is that of a Hanoverian colonel,* and the most exquisitely finished and heroic character in all his novels, that of a Presbyterian milkmaid.

5. But before I press any of his opinions—or I ought rather to say, knowledges—upon you, I must try to give you some idea of his own temper and life. His temper, I say; the mixture of clay, and the fineness of it, out of which the Potter made him; and of his life, what the power of the Third Fors had been upon it, before his own hands could make or mar his fortune, at the turn of tide.[1] I shall do this merely by abstracting and collating (with comment) some passages out of Lockhart's life of him; and adding any elucidatory pieces which Lockhart refers to, or which I can find myself, in his own works, so that you may be able to read them easily together. And observe, I am not writing, or attempting to write, another life of Scott; but only putting together bits of Lockhart's life in the order which my side-notes on the pages indicate for my own reading; and I shall use Lockhart's words, or my own, indifferently, and without the plague of inverted

* Colonel Talbot, in *Waverley;* I need not, surely, name the other:—note only that, in speaking of heroism, I never admit into the field of comparison the merely stage-ideals of impossible virtue and fortune—(Ivanhoe, Sir Kenneth,[2] and the like)—but only persons whom Scott meant to be real. Observe also that with Scott, as with Titian, you must often expect the most tender pieces of completion in subordinate characters.

[1] [See *Julius Cæsar*, Act iv. sc. 3.]

[2] [For Colonel Talbot, compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 59 (Vol. XVIII. p. 115 n.); and for Jeanie Deans, in *The Heart of Midlothian*, ibid.; *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 113; and *Fors*, Letters 42, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 98); 91, § 4, and 92, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 441, 449). To Sir Kenneth of the Couchant Leopard, Prince Royal of Scotland, Ruskin does not elsewhere specifically refer, though for a general criticism of *The Talisman*, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 12.]

commas. Therefore, if anything is wrong in my statement, Lockhart is not answerable for it; but my own work in the business will nevertheless be little more than what the French call putting dots on the i's,[1] and adding such notes as may be needful for our present thought.

6. Sir Walter was born on the 15th August, 1771, in a house belonging to his father, at the head of the College Wynd, Edinburgh. The house was pulled down to make room for the northern front of the New College; and the wise people of Edinburgh then built, for I don't know how many thousand pounds, a small vulgar Gothic steeple on the ground, and called it the "Scott Monument."[2] There seems, however, to have been more reason than usual for the destruction of the College Wynd, for Scott was the first survivor of seven children born in it to his father, and appears to have been saved only by the removal to the house in George's Square,* which his father always afterwards occupied; and by being also sent soon afterwards into the open country. He was of purest Border race—seventh in descent from Wat of Harden and the Flower of Yarrow. Here are his six ancestors, from the sixteenth century, in order:—

1. Walter Scott (Auld Wat) of Harden.
2. Sir William Scott of Harden.
3. Walter Scott of Raeburn.
4. Walter Scott, Tutor of Raeburn.
5. Robert Scott of Sandy-Knowe.
6. Walter Scott, citizen of Edinburgh.

* I beg my readers to observe that I never flinch from stating a fact that tells against me. This George's Square is in that New Town of Edinburgh[3] which I said, in the first of these letters, I should like to destroy to the ground.[4]

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[1] ["Mettre les points sur les i": see Littré, under "I."]

[2] [Ruskin here confuses the New College, which is the United Free Church College and Assembly Hall, and which stands at the head of the Mound overlooking the Scott Monument, with the University. The house, in which Walter Scott was born, was pulled down in 1871 to improve what is now Chambers Street, and to open up the view of the northern front of the University. For the cost, and other particulars, of the Monument, see the note to Ruskin's early paper on the subject at Vol. I. p. 264.]

[3] [But see below, Letter 32, § 23 (p. 602).]

[4] [See above, p. 15.]

7. I will note briefly what is important respecting each of these.

(1.) Wat of Harden. Harden means "the ravine of hares." It is a glen down which a little brook flows to join the river Borthwick, itself a tributary of the Teviot, six miles west of Hawick; and just opposite Branxholm. So long as Sir Walter retained his vigorous habits, he made a yearly pilgrimage to it, with whatever friend happened to be his guest at the time.*

Wat's wife, Mary, the Flower of Yarrow, is said to have chiefly owed her celebrity to the love of an English captive,—a beautiful child whom she had rescued from the tender mercies† of Wat's moss-troopers,[1] on their return from a Cumberland foray. The youth grew up under her protection, and is believed to have written both the words and music of many of the best songs of the Border.‡

This story is evidently the germ of that of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, only the captivity is there of a Scottish boy to the English. The lines describing Wat of Harden are in the 4th canto,[2]—

> "Marauding chief; his sole delight
> The moonlight raid, the morning fight.
> Not even the Flower of Yarrow's charms,
> In youth, might tame his rage for arms;
> And still in age he spurned at rest,
> And still his brows the helmet pressed,
> Albeit the blanchèd locks below
> Were white as Dinlay's spotless snow."§

* Lockhart's *Life*, 8vo. Edinburgh: Cadell, 1837. Vol. i. p. 65. In my following footnotes I shall only give volume and page—the book being understood.

† i. 67. What sort of tender mercies were to be expected?

‡ His name unknown, according to Leyden,[3] is perhaps discoverable; but what songs? Though composed by an Englishman, have they the special character of Scottish music?

§ Dinlay;—where?[4]

[1] [On this word, see *Proserpina*, i. ch. i. § 13 (Vol. XXV. p. 213).]

[2] [Stanza ix.]

[3] [John Leyden (1775–1811), the physician and poet who assisted Scott with the earlier volumes of the *Border Minstrelsy*, and appears frequently in the earlier part of Lockhart's *Life of Scott*. See the verses by Leyden on "the nameless minstrel" in Lockhart, vol. i. p. 67.]

[4] [In Liddesdale: see Letter 32, § 24 (p. 602).]

8. With these, read also the answer of the lady of Branksome, 26th and 27th stanzas,—

"'Say to your lords of high emprize,
Who war on women and on boys,—
For the young heir of Branksome's line,
God be his aid; and God be mine:
Through me no friend shall meet his doom;
Here, while I live, no foe finds room.'

. . . . . .

Proud she looked round, applause to claim;
Then lightened Thirlstane's eye of flame;
His bugle Wat of Harden blew.
Pensils * and pennons wide were flung,
To heaven the Border slogan rung,
'St. Mary, for the young Buccleugh.'"

Let us stop here to consider what good there may be in all this for *us*. The last line, "St. Mary, for the young Buccleugh," probably sounds absurd enough to you. You have nothing whatever to do, you think, with either of these personages. You don't care for any St. Mary; and still less for any, either young or old, Buccleugh?

Well, I'm sorry for you:—but if you don't care for St. Mary, the wife of Joseph, do you care at all for St. Mary-Anne, the wife of Joe? Have you any faith in the holiness of your own wives, who are here, in flesh and blood? or do you verily wish them, as Mr. Mill † would have it—

* Pensil, a flag hanging down—"pensile." Pennon, a stiff flag sustained by a cross arm, like the broad part of a weathercock. Properly, it is the stiff-set feather of an arrow.

"Ny autres riens qui d'or ne fust,
Fors que les pennons et le fust."

*Romance of the Rose*, of Love's arrows: Chaucer translates,

"For all was gold, men might see,
Out-take the feathers and the tree."[1]

† People would not have me speak any more harm of Mr. Mill, because he's dead,[2] I suppose? Dead or alive, all's one to me, with mischievous persons; but alas! how very grievously all's two to me, when they are helpful and noble ones.

[1] [Lines 947, 948 in Chaucer.]
[2] [The death of Mill had just occurred (May 8, 1873).]

sacrifice all pretence to saintship, as to holy days—to follow "some more lucrative occupation than that of nursing the baby"?[1] And you don't care for the young Buccleugh? Cut away the cleugh, then, and read the Buc backwards. Do you care for your own cub as much as Sir Walter would have cared for his own beast? (see, farther on, how he takes care of his wire-haired terrier, Spice[2]), or as any beast cares for *its* cub? Or do you send your poor little brat to make money for you, like your wife; as though a cock should send his hen and chickens to pick up what they could for *him;* and it were the usual law of nature that nestlings should feed the parent bird? If that be your way of liberal modern life, believe me, the Border faith in its Mary and its master, however servile, was not benighted in comparison.

9. But the Border morals? "Marauding chief, whose sole delight," etc.[3] Just look for the passages indicated under the word "theft" in my fine new index to the first two volumes of *Fors*.[4] I will come back to this point: for the present, in order to get it more clearly into your minds, remember that the Flower of Yarrow was the chieftainess to whom the invention of serving the empty dish with two spurs in it, for hint to her husband that he must ride for his next dinner, is first ascribed. Also, for comparison of the English customs of the same time, read this little bit of a letter of Lord Northumberland's to Henry VIII. in 1538:*—

"Please it your most gracious Highness to be advertised that my comptroller, with Raynold Carnaby, desired licence of me to invade the realm of Scotland, to the annoyance of your Highness's enemies, and so they did meet upon Monday before night, at Warhope, upon North Tyne

* Out of the first of Scott's notes to the Lay,[5] but the note is so long that careless readers are sure to miss the points; also I give modern spelling for greater ease.

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[1] [See Letter 24, § 20 (p. 431).]
[2] [See Scott's letter to Miss Edgeworth, dated February 24, 1824, in Lockhart's *Life*, vol. v. p. 342.]
[3] [See above, § 7.]
[4] [See Vol. XXIX.]
[5] [Note D.]

water, to the number of 1500 men: and so invaded Scotland, at the hour of eight of the clock at night, and actively did set upon a town* called Branxholm, where the Lord of Buccleugh dwelleth, albeit that knight he was not at home. And so they burnt the said Branxholm, and other towns, and had ordered themselves so that sundry of the said Lord Buccleugh's servants, who did issue forth of his gates, were taken prisoners. They did not leave one house, one stack of corn, nor one sheaf without the gate of the said Lord Buccleugh unburnt; and so in the breaking of the day receded homeward. And thus, thanks be to God, your Highness's subjects, about the hour of twelve of the clock the same day, came into this, your Highness's realm, bringing with them above forty Scotsmen prisoners, one of them named Scott, of the surname and kin of the said Lord of Buccleugh. And of his household they brought also three hundred nowte" (cattle), "and above sixty horses and mares, keeping in safety from loss or hurt all your said Highness's subjects."

They had met the evening before on the North Tyne, under Carter Fell (you will find the place partly marked as "Plashett's coal-fields" in modern atlases[1]); rode and marched their twenty miles to Branxholm; busied themselves there, as we hear, till dawn, and so back thirty miles down Liddesdale,—a fifty miles' ride and walk altogether, all finished before twelve on Tuesday: besides what pillaging and burning had to be done.

10. Now, but one more point is to be noticed, and we will get on with our genealogy.

After this bit of the Earl's letter, you will better understand the speech of the Lady of Buccleugh, defending her castle in the absence of her lord,[2] and with her boy taken prisoner. And now look back to my 25th letter, for I want you not to forget Alice of Salisbury.[3] King Edward's first sight of her was just after she had held her castle exactly in this way, against a raid of the Scots in Lord Salisbury's absence. Edward rode night and day to help her; and the Scots besiegers, breaking up at his approach, this is what follows, which you may receive on

* A walled group of houses: tynen, Saxon, to shut in (Johnson).[4]

[1] [Plashetts and Tynehead, a parish near Falstone containing many coal mines.]
[2] [See above, § 8.]
[3] [Letter 25, § 23 (p. 469).]
[4] [On the defence of towns, see *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 165 (Vol. XVIII. p. 517 *n.*).]

plainest of his daughters. The contract of marriage, written on the parchment of a drum, is still in possession of the family of Harden.*

This is Lockhart's reading of the circumstances, and I give his own statement of them in the note below. But his assumption of the extreme plainness of the young lady, and of the absolute worldly-mindedness of the mother, are both examples of the modern manner of reading traditions, out of which some amusement may be gathered by looking only at them on the grotesque side, and interpreting that grotesqueness ungenerously. There may, indeed, be farther

* i. 68. "The indignant laird was on the point of desiring his prisoner to say a last prayer, when his more considerate dame interposed milder counsels, suggesting that the culprit was born to a good estate, and that they had three unmarried daughters. Young Harden, not it is said without hesitation, agreed to save his life by taking the plainest of the three of their hands."

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quite possible that Edward may have fallen in love with the Countess of Salisbury at some time or other, yet it is certain that Froissart's story of the time when, and circumstances under which he did so, is entirely devoid of foundation." This is also the opinion of the author of the best edition of Froissart: see *Œuvres de Froissart publiées avec les variations des divers manuscrits*, par M. le Baron Kervyn de Lettenhove (Brussels, 1867, etc.), vol. xxiii. pp. 101–107. Ruskin gets the name "Alice" of Salisbury (not given in Johnes's translation) from an earlier passage in Froissart, who, in describing the services rendered to the King by William de Montacute, first Earl of Salisbury (1337), says: "et pour lui rémunérer ses bons services, li rois li donna le jone contesse de Salebrin, madame Aélis, dont il tenoit la terre en se main et en garde, et estoit li une des plus belles jones dames del monde" (vol. ii. p. 420, Lettenhove). The name of Montacute's wife, however, was not Alice, but Catharine, daughter of Sir William Grandison.

With regard to the story of the garter, it may be noted that Froissart, who notes the institution of the Order, does not mention the tale which afterwards became popular. It is first given, nearly two hundred years after the event, by Polydore Vergil (1534) in his *Historia Anglica* (see vol. ii. p. 964, 1603 edition), who mentions no name in connexion with it. Later writers, in accepting the story, are at variance as to which Countess of Salisbury was the heroine of it; some naming Catharine Montacute (Froissart's "Alice"), others Joan, the Fair Maid of Kent. Heylyn (*Cosmographie and History of the Whole World*, 1621, vol. i. p. 286), Ashmole (*Order of the Garter*, 1672, p. 179), and Guillim (*Display of Heraldrie*, p. 171) reject the tale. "It is," says Heylyn, "a vain and idle Romance, derogatory both to the Founder and the Order, first published by Pol. Virgil, a stranger to the affairs of England, and by him taken upon no better ground than fama vulgi, the tradition of the common people, too trifling a foundation to so great a building." Ruskin probably followed pp. 67–68, vol. ii. of *The Theater of Honour and Knighthood; or, A Compendious Chronicle and Historie of the whole Christian World*. Written in French, by Andrew Favine. London: Printed by William Jaggard, 1623 (an English translation of the French original of 1620). Favine there accepts Vergil's story, and gives the passages from Froissart.]

ground than Lockhart has thought it worth while to state for his colour of the facts; but all that can be justly gathered from those he has told is that, Sir Gideon having determined the death of his troublesome neighbour, Lady Murray interfered to save his life: and could not more forcibly touch her husband's purpose than by reminding him that hostility might be better ended in alliance than in death.

The sincere and careful affection which Sir William of Harden afterwards shows to all his children by the Maid of Elibank, and his naming one of them after her father, induce me still farther to trust in the fairer reading of the tradition. I should, indeed, have been disposed to attach some weight, on the side of the vulgar story, to the curiously religious tendencies in Sir William's children, which seem to point to some condition of feeling in the mother, arising out of despised life. Women are made nobly religious by the possession of extreme beauty, and morbidly so by distressed consciousness of the want of it; but there is no reason for insisting on this probability, since both the Christian and surname of Sir Gideon Murray point to his connection with the party in Scotland which was at this time made strong in battle by religious faith, and melancholy in peace by religious passion.

12. (III.) Walter Scott, first Laird of Raeburn; third son of Sir William and this enforced bride of Elibank. They had four sons altogether; the eldest, William, becomes the second Sir William of Harden; their father settled the lands of Raeburn upon Walter; and of Highchester on his second son, Gideon, named, after the rough father-in-law, of Elibank.

Now about this time (1657), George Fox comes into Scotland: boasting that "as he first set his horse's feet upon Scottish ground he felt the seed of grace to sparkle about him like innumerable sparks of fire."[1] And he forthwith succeeds in making Quakers of Gideon, Walter, and Walter's wife. This is too much for Sir William of Harden, the

[1] [*Heart of Midlothian*, Dedication, *n.*]

the elder are long since settled in America (male heirs extinct). James Scott, well known in India as one of the original settlers of Prince of Wales Island, was a son of the youngest, who died at Lasswade, in Midlothian (first mention of Scott's Lasswade).

14. But of the second son, Scott's grandfather, we have to learn much.

(v.) Robert Scott of Sandy-Knowe, second son of Beardie. I cannot shorten Scott's own account of the circumstances which determined his choice of life:—

"My grandfather was originally bred to the sea, but being shipwrecked near Dundee in his trial voyage, he took such a sincere dislike to that element, that he could not be persuaded to a second attempt. This occasioned a quarrel between him and his father, who left him to shift for himself. Robert was one of those active spirits to whom this was no misfortune. He turned Whig upon the spot, and fairly abjured his father's politics and his learned poverty. His chief and relative, Mr. Scott of Harden, gave him a lease of the farm of Sandy-Knowe, comprehending the rocks in the centre of which Smailholm or Sandy-Knowe Tower is situated. He took for his shepherd an old man called Hogg, who willingly lent him, out of respect to his family, his whole savings, about £30, to stock the new farm. With this sum, which it seems was at the time sufficient for the purpose, the master and servant * set off to purchase a stock of sheep at Whitsun-tryste, a fair held on a hill near Wooler, in Northumberland. The old shepherd went carefully from drove to drove, till he found a hirsel likely to answer their purpose, and then returned to tell his master to come up and conclude the bargain. But what was his surprise to see him galloping a mettled hunter about the race-course, and to find he had expended the whole stock in this extraordinary purchase! Moses' bargain of green spectacles did not strike more dismay into the Vicar of Wakefield's family than my grandfather's rashness into the poor old shepherd. The thing, however, was irretrievable, and they returned without the sheep. In the course of a few days, however, my grandfather, who was one of the best horsemen of his time, attended John Scott of Harden's hounds on this same horse, and displayed him to such advantage that he sold him for double the original price. The farm was now stocked in earnest, and the rest of my grandfather's career was that of successful industry. He was one of the first who were active in the cattle trade, afterwards carried to such an extent between the Highlands of Scotland and the leading counties in England, and by his droving transactions acquired a considerable sum of money. He was a man of middle stature, extremely active, quick, keen, and fiery in his temper, stubbornly honest,

* Here, you see, our subject begins to purpose![1]

[1] [See Letter 29, § 5 (p. 531), and above, § 4.]

and so distinguished for his skill in country matters that he was the general referee in all points of dispute which occurred in the neighbourhood. His birth being admitted as gentle, gave him access to the best society in the county, and his dexterity in country sports, particularly hunting, made him an acceptable companion in the field as well as at the table."[1]

15. Thus, then, between Auld Wat of Harden, and Scott's grandfather, we have four generations, numbering approximately a hundred and fifty years, from 1580 to 1730,* and in that time we have the great change in national manners from stealing cattle to breeding and selling them, which at first might seem a change in the way of gradually increasing honesty. But observe that this *first* cattle-dealer of our line is "*stubbornly* honest," a quality which it would be unsafe to calculate upon in any dealer of our own days.

Do you suppose, then, that this honesty was a sudden and momentary virtue—a lightning flash of probity between the two darknesses of Auld Wat's thieving and modern cozening?

Not so. That open thieving had no dishonesty in it whatsoever.[2] Far the contrary. Of all conceivable ways of getting a living, except by actual digging of the ground, this is precisely the honestest. All other gentlemanly professions but this have taint of dishonesty in them. Even the best—the physician's—involves temptation to many forms of cozening. How many second-rate mediciners have lived, think you, on prescriptions of bread pills and rose-coloured water?—how many, even of leading physicians, owe all their success to skill unaided by pretence? Of clergymen, how many preach wholly what they know to be true without fear of their congregations? Of lawyers, of authors, of painters, what need we speak? These all, so far as they try to please the mob for their living, are

* I give the round numbers for better remembering. Wat of Harden married the Flower of Yarrow in 1567; Robert of Sandy-Knowe married Barbara Haliburton in 1728.

[1] [Scott's Autobiography in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. i. pp. 5, 6.]
[2] [Compare Letters 7, § 13; 14, § 1; and 22, § 20 (pp. 127, 243, 385).]

or whether, which I rather think, Scott means to mark distinctly the literal gentleness and softening of character in his grandfather, and in the Lowland Scottish shepherd of his day, as opposed to the still fiery temper of the Highland clans—the blood being equally pure, but the race altogether softer and more Saxon. Even Auld Wat was fair-haired, and Beardie has "amber beard and flaxen hair."

> "Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
> Content with equity unbought."—

Here you have the exactly right and wise condition of the legal profession.

18. All good judging, and all good preaching, must be given gratis. Look back to what I have incidentally said of lawyers and clergy, as professional—that is to say, as living by their judgment, and sermons.[1] You will perhaps now be able to receive my conclusive statement, that all such professional sale of justice and mercy is a deadly sin. A man may sell the work of his hands, but not his equity, nor his piety. Let him live by his spade; and if his neighbours find him wise enough to decide a dispute between them, or if he is in modesty and simplicity able to give them a piece of pious advice, let him do so, in Heaven's name, but not take a fee for it.

19. Finally, Robert Scott is a cattle-dealer, yet a gentleman, giving us the exact balance of right between the pride which refuses a simple employment, and the baseness which makes that simple employment disgraceful, because dishonest. Being wholly upright, he can sell cattle, yet not disgrace his lineage. We shall return presently to his house;[2] but must first complete, so as to get our range of view within due limits, the sketch of the entire ancestral line.

20. (VI.) Walter Scott, of George's Square, Edinburgh, Scott's father, born 1729.

[1] [See above, § 15; and compare Letter 75, § 21 (Vol. XXIX. p. 77).]

[2] [This, however, was not done; though the locality of Sandy Knowe generally is described in the next letter.]

He was the eldest son of Robert of Sandy-Knowe, and had three brothers and a sister, namely, Captain Robert Scott, in East India Service; Thomas Scott, cattle-dealer, following his father's business; a younger brother who died early, (also) in East India Service; and the sister Janet, whose part in Scott's education was no less constant, and perhaps more influential, than even his mother's. Scott's regard for one of his Indian uncles, and his regret for the other's death, are both traceable in the development of the character of Colonel Mannering; but of his uncle Thomas, and his aunt Jessie,[1] there is much more to be learned and thought on.

21. The cattle-dealer followed his father's business prosperously; was twice married—first to Miss Raeburn, and then to Miss Rutherford of Knowsouth—and retired, in his old age, upon a handsome independence. Lockhart, visiting him with Sir Walter, two years before the old man's death (he being then eighty-eight years old), thus describes him:—

"I thought him about the most venerable figure I had ever set my eyes on,—tall and erect, with long flowing tresses of the most silvery whiteness, and stockings rolled up over his knees, after the fashion of three generations back. He sat reading his Bible without spectacles, and did not, for a moment, perceive that any one had entered his room; but on recognizing his nephew he rose with cordial alacrity, kissing him on both cheeks, and exclaiming, 'God bless thee, Walter, my man; thou hast risen to be great, but thou wast always good.' His remarks were lively and sagacious, and delivered with a touch of that humour which seems to have been shared by most of the family. He had the air and manners of an ancient gentleman, and must in his day have been eminently handsome."[2]

22. Next read Sir Walter Scott's entry made in his copy of the Haliburton Memorials:—

"The said Thomas Scott died at Monklaw, near Jedburgh, at two of the clock, 27th January, 1823, in the 90th year of his life, and fully possessed of all his faculties. He read till nearly the year before his

[1] [Ruskin, it may be noted, uses the name "Janet," and its common substitute "Jessie," indiscriminately for Scott's aunt; by Lockhart and by Scott, she is always called "Janet." Ruskin, no doubt, chooses to call her "Jessie," so that both he and Scott may have an "Aunt Jessie": for Ruskin's aunt, see Letter 63, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 546).]

[2] [Lockhart, vol. i. pp. 74, 75.]

death; and being a great musician on the Scotch pipes, had, when on his deathbed, a favourite tune played over to him by his son James, that he might be sure he left him in full possession of it. After hearing it, he hummed it over himself, and corrected it in several of the notes. The air was that called 'Sour Plums in Galashiels.'[1] When barks and other tonics were given him during his last illness, he privately spat them into his handkerchief, saying, as he had lived all his life without taking doctor's drugs, he wished to die without doing so."[2]

No occasion whatever for deathbed repentances, you perceive, on the part of this old gentleman; no particular care even for the disposition of his handsome independence; but here is a bequest of which one must see one's son in full possession—here is a thing to be well looked after, before setting out for heaven, that the tune of "Sour Plums in Galashiels" may still be played on earth in an incorrupt manner, and no damnable French or English variations intruded upon the solemn and authentic melody thereof. His views on the subject of Materia Medica are also greatly to be respected.

"I saw more than once," Lockhart goes on, "this respectable man's sister (Scott's aunt Janet), who had married her cousin Walter, Laird of Raeburn, thus adding a new link to the closeness of the family connection. She also must have been, in her youth, remarkable for personal attractions; as it was, she dwells on my memory as the perfect picture of an old Scotch lady, with a great deal of simple dignity in her bearing, but with the softest eye and the sweetest voice, and a charm of meekness and gentleness about every look and expression. She spoke her native language pure and undiluted, but without the slightest tincture of that vulgarity which now seems almost unavoidable in the oral use of a dialect so long banished from courts, and which has not been avoided by any modern writer who has ventured to introduce it, with the exception of Scott, and I may add, speaking generally, of Burns. Lady Raeburn, as she was universally styled, may be numbered with those friends of early days whom her nephew has alluded to in one of his prefaces as preserving what we may fancy to have been the old Scotch of Holyrood."[3]

28. To this aunt, to his grandmother, his mother, and to the noble and most wise Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, Dr. Adam,[4] Scott owed the essential part of his

[1] [See Letter 33, § 8 (p. 613).]
[2] [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 74.]
[3] [*Ibid.*, p. 75.]
[4] [Alexander Adam (1741–1801), author of a Latin Grammar, learnt by Ruskin (see *Præterita*, i. §§ 64, 92; ii. § 229 *n.*); see also the last-mentioned place for a conversation with Carlyle about Adam.]

## LETTER 32

### SANDY-KNOWE

1. I DO not know how far I shall be able in this letter to carry you forward in the story of Scott's life; let me first, therefore, map its divisions clearly; for then, wherever we have to stop, we can return to our point in fit time.

First, note these three great divisions—essentially those of all men's lives, but singularly separate in his,—the days of youth, of labour, and of death.

Youth is properly the forming time—that in which a man makes himself, or is made, what he is for ever to be. Then comes the time of labour, when, having become the best he can be, he does the best he can do.[1] Then the time of death, which, in happy lives, is very short: but always a *time*. The ceasing to breathe is only the *end* of death.

2. Scott records the beginning of his own death in the following entry in his diary, which reviews the life then virtually ended:—

"*December 18th, 1825.**—What a life mine has been!—half educated, almost wholly neglected, or left to myself; stuffing my head with most nonsensical trash, and undervalued by most of my companions for a time; getting forward, and held a bold, clever fellow, contrary to the opinion of all who thought me a mere dreamer; broken-hearted for two years; my heart handsomely pieced again, but the crack will remain till my dying day. Rich and poor four or five times: once on the verge of ruin, yet opened a new source of wealth almost overflowing. Now to be broken in my pitch of pride . . .†

* Lockhart, vol. vi., pp. 164, 165.

† Portion omitted short, and of no moment just now. I shall refer to it afterwards.[2]

[1] [Ruskin, in re-reading *Fors*, marked this passage for special emphasis.]

[2] [The omitted portion is ". . . pitch of pride, and nearly winged (unless good news should come), because London chooses to be in an uproar, and in the tumult of bulls and bears a poor inoffensive lion like myself is pushed to the wall. But what is to be the end of it? God knows; and so ends the catechism. Nobody in the end . . ." Ruskin does not refer to this passage afterwards. But the entry of

"Nobody in the end can lose a penny by me; that is one comfort. Men will think pride has had a fall. Let them indulge their own pride in thinking that my fall will make them higher, or seem so at least. I have the satisfaction to recollect that my prosperity has been of advantage to many, and to hope that some at least will forgive my transient wealth on account of the innocence of my intentions, and my real wish to do good to the poor. Sad hearts, too, at Darnick, and in the cottages of Abbotsford. I have half resolved never to see the place again. How could I tread my hall with such a diminished crest?—how live a poor, indebted man, where I was once the wealthy, the honoured? I was to have gone there on Saturday, in joy and prosperity, to receive my friends. My dogs will wait for me in vain. It is foolish, but the thoughts of parting from these dumb creatures have moved me more than any of the painful reflections I have put down. Poor things, I must get them kind masters! There may be yet those who, loving me, may love my dog because it has been mine. I must end these gloomy forebodings, or I shall lose the tone of mind with which men should meet distress. I feel my dogs' feet on my knees; I hear them whining, and seeking me everywhere."

He was fifty-four on the 15th August of that year, and spoke his last words—"God bless you all,"[1]—on the 21st September, 1832: so ending seven years of death.

8. His youth, like the youth of all the greatest men, had been long, and rich in peace, and altogether accumulative and crescent. I count it to end with that pain which you see he remembers to his dying day, given him by—Lilias Redgauntlet, in October, 1796.[2] Whereon he sets himself to his work, which goes on nobly for thirty years, lapping over a little into the death-time* (*Woodstock* showing scarcely a trace of diminution of power[3]).

* The actual toil gone through by him is far greater during the last years than before—in fact it is unceasing, and mortal; but I count only as the true labour-time that which is healthy and fruitful.

"December 18, 1825" includes further *preceding* passages; and among them, the few lines quoted by Ruskin below, p. 598. It is probably to this earlier passage, and not to the later one, that Ruskin here intended to refer.]

[1] [Lockhart, vol. vii. p. 394.]

[2] [The allusion is to Scott's early attachment to Williamina, daughter of Sir John and Lady Jane Stuart Belches of Inverary—ended by her marriage on October 12, 1796, to William Forbes (afterwards Sir William) of Pitsligo, a banker who proved to be one of Scott's most generous and delicate friends in the time of his financial troubles. This love affair is noticed by Lockhart (i. pp. 161 *seq.*, 242–244), who says (i. p. 161) that "Scott himself unquestionably sat for his own picture in young Alan Fairford," and suggests that Lilias Redgauntlet was in some respects drawn from his early love.]

[3] [On *Woodstock* (finished March 26, 1826), compare *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 27 *n.*]

Count, therefore, thus:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Youth, twenty-five years . . | 1771–1796. |
| Labour-time, thirty years . . | 1796–1826. |
| Death-time, seven years . . | 1825–1832. |

4. The great period of mid-life is again divided exactly in the midst by the change of temper which made him accurate instead of fantastic in delineation, and therefore habitually write in prose rather than verse. The *Lady of the Lake* is his last poem (1810). *Rokeby* (1812) is a versified novel; the *Lord of the Isles* is not so much. The steady legal and historical work of 1810–1814, issuing in the Essay on Scottish Judicature, and the Life of Swift, with preparation for his long-cherished purpose of an edition and Life of Pope* ("the true deacon of the craft," as Scott often called him[1]), confirmed, while they restrained and chastised, his imaginative power; and *Waverley* (begun in 1805) was completed in 1814. The apparently unproductive year of accurate study, 1811, divides the thirty years of mid-life in the precise centre, giving fifteen to song, and fifteen to history.

You may be surprised at my speaking of the novels as history. But Scott's final estimate of his own work, given in 1830, is a perfectly sincere and perfectly just one (received, of course, with the allowance I have warned you always to make for his manner of reserve in expressing deep feelings[2]). "He replied † that in what he had done for Scotland as a writer, he was no more entitled to the merit which had been ascribed to him than the servant who scours the brasses to the credit of having made them:

* If my own life is spared a little longer, I can at least rescue Pope from the hands of his present scavenger biographer:[3] but alas, for Scott's loving hand and noble thought, lost to him!

† To the speech of Mr. Baillie of Jerviswoode; vol. vii., p. 221.

[1] [See Lockhart, vol. iii. p. 121.]

[2] [See above, p. 575.]

[3] [See Letter 40, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 75–76). Ruskin, however, never found time to write on Pope.]

that he had perhaps been a good housemaid to Scotland, and given the country a 'rubbing up'; and in so doing might have deserved some praise for assiduity, and that was all." Distinguish, however, yourselves, and remember that Scott always tacitly distinguishes, between the industry which deserves praise, and the love which disdains it.[1] You do not praise Old Mortality for his love to his people; you praise him for his patience over a bit of moss in a troublesome corner.[2] Scott is the Old Mortality, not of tables of stone, but of the fleshly tables of the heart.[3]

5. We address ourselves to-day, then, to begin the analysis of the influences upon him during the first period of twenty-five years, during which he built and filled the treasure-house of his own heart. But this time of youth I must again map out in minor detail, that we may grasp it clearly.

(1.) From birth to three years old. In Edinburgh, a sickly child; permanent lameness contracted, 1771–1774.

(2.) Three years old to four. Recovers health at Sandy-Knowe. The dawn of conscious life, 1774–1775.

(3.) Four years old to five. At Bath, with his aunt, passing through London on the way to it. Learns to read, and much besides, 1775–1776.

(4.) Five years old to eight. At Sandy-Knowe. Pastoral life in its perfectness forming his character (an important though short interval at Prestonpans begins his interest in sea-shore), 1776–1779.

(5.) Eight years old to twelve. School life, under the Rector Adam, at High School of Edinburgh, with his aunt Janet to receive him at Kelso, 1779–1788.

(6.) Twelve years old to fifteen. College life, broken by illness, his uncle Robert taking good care of him at Rosebank, 1783–1786.

(7.) Fifteen to twenty-five. Apprenticeship to his father,

[1] [Here, again, Ruskin in re-reading *Fors* marked this sentence with special emphasis.]

[2] [See the Introduction to *Old Mortality*.]

[3] [2 Corinthians iii. 3.]

and law practice entered on. Study of human life, an of various literature in Edinburgh. His first fee of an importance expended on a silver taper-stand for his mothe 1786–1796.[1]

6. You have thus "seven ages"[2] of his youth to examin one by one; and this convenient number really comes ou without the least forcing; for the virtual, though no formal, apprenticeship to his father—happiest of states fo a good son—continues through all the time of his lega practice. I only feel a little compunction at crowding the Prestonpans time together with the second Sandy-Know time; but the former is too short to be made a period though of infinite importance to Scott's life. Hear how h writes of it,* revisiting the place fifty years afterwards:—

"I knew the house of Mr. Warroch, where we lived (see where the name of the Point of Warroch in *Guy Mannering* comes from![3]) "I recollected my juvenile idea of dignity attendant on the large gate, a black arch which lets out upon the sea. I saw the Links where I arranged my shells upon the turf, and swam my little skiff in the pools. Many recollections of my kind aunt—of old George Constable—of Dalgetty" (you know *that* name also, don't you?[4]), "a virtuous half-pay lieutenant, who swaggered his solitary walk on the parade, as he called a little open space before the same port." (Before the black arch, Scott means not the harbour.) And he falls in love also there, first—"as children love."[5]

7. And now we can begin to count the rosary of his youth, bead by bead.

(1st period—From birth to three years old.)

* Vol. vii., p. 213.

[1] [Of these "seven ages," Ruskin only deals methodically with three—(1) in this letter, §§ 7, 8; (2) §§ 9–12; (3) in Letter 33. For some additional passages dealing with later periods, see Appendix 8, Vol. XXIX. pp. 541–545, where Ruskin makes period (7) last till 1799.]

[2] [*As You Like It*, Act ii. sc. 7.]

[3] [*Guy Mannering*, ch. ix.]

[4] [See *A Legend of Montrose*.]

[5] [See Lockhart, vol. vii. p. 214.]

I have hitherto said nothing to you of his father or mother, nor shall I yet, except to bid you observe that they had been thirteen years married when Scott was born; and that his mother was the daughter of a physician, Dr. Rutherford, who had been educated under Boerhaave.[1] This fact might be carelessly passed by you in reading Lockhart; but if you will take the pains to look through Johnson's life of Boerhaave, you will see how perfectly pure and beautiful and strong every influence was, which, from whatever distance, touched the early life of Scott. I quote a sentence or two from Johnson's closing account of Dr. Rutherford's master:—

"There was in his air and motion something rough and artless, but so majestic and great at the same time, that no man ever looked upon him without veneration, and a kind of tacit submission to the superiority of his genius. The vigour and activity of his mind sparkled visibly in his eyes, nor was it ever observed that any change of his fortune, or alteration in his affairs, whether happy or unfortunate, affected his countenance.

"His greatest pleasure was to retire to his house in the country, where he had a garden stored with all the herbs and trees which the climate would bear; here he used to enjoy his hours unmolested, and prosecute his studies without interruption." *

* Not to break away from my text too long, I add one or two farther points worth notice, here:—

"Boerhaave lost none of his hours, but when he had attained one science attempted another. He added physick to divinity, chemistry to the mathematicks, and anatomy to botany.

"He knew the importance of his own writings to mankind, and lest he might, by a roughness and barbarity of style too frequent among men of great learning, disappoint his own intentions, and make his labours less useful, he did not neglect the politer arts of eloquence and poetry. Thus was his learning at once various and exact, profound and agreeable.

"But his knowledge, however uncommon, holds in his character but the second place; his virtue was yet much more uncommon than his learning.

"Being once asked by a friend, who had often admired his patience under great provocations, whether he knew what it was to be angry, and by what means he had so entirely suppressed that impetuous and ungovernable passion, he answered, with the utmost frankness and sincerity, that he was naturally quick of resentment, but that he had, by daily prayer and meditation, at length attained to this mastery over himself."

[1] [Dr. Herman Boerhaave (1668–1738), Professor of Physick at Leyden. For his life, see *Works of Samuel Johnson* (Oxford edition, 1825), vol. vi. Ruskin quotes (in his text and note) from pp. 289, 290.]

The school of medicine in Edinburgh owed its rise to this man, and it was by his pupil Dr. Rutherford's advice, as we saw, that the infant Walter's life was saved.[1] His mother could not nurse him, and his first nurse had consumption. To this, and the close air of the wynd, must be attributed the strength of the childish fever which took away the use of the right limb when he was eighteen months old. How many of your own children die, think you, or are wasted with sickness, from the same causes in our increasing cities? Scott's lameness, however, we shall find,[2] was, in the end, like every other condition of his appointed existence, helpful to him.

8. A letter from my dear friend, Dr. John Brown,[3] corrects (to my great delight) a mistake about George's Square I made in my last letter.* It is not in the New Town, but in what was then a meadow district, sloping to the south from old Edinburgh; and the air of it would be almost as healthy for the child as that of the open country. But the change to George's Square, though it checked the illness, did not restore the use of the limb: the boy wanted exercise as well as air, and Dr. Rutherford sent him to his other grandfather's farm.

9. (II. 1774–1775.) The first year at Sandy-Knowe. In this year, note first his new nurse. The child had a maid sent with him to prevent his being an inconvenience to the family. This maid had left her heart behind her in Edinburgh (ill trusted),† and went mad in the solitude;—"tempted by the devil," she told Alison Wilson, the housekeeper, "to kill the child and bury it in the moss."

"Alison instantly took possession of my person," says

* See terminal notes [p. 602].

† Autobiography, p. 15 [in Lockhart, vol. i.].

[1] [See Letter 31, § 23 (p. 583).]

[2] [See pp. 591, 690.]

[3] [Letter 31, § 6 (p. 565). For Ruskin's friendship with Dr. Brown, see Vol. XII. p. xx.]

Scott. And there is no more said of Alison in the autobiography.

But what the old farm-housekeeper must have been to the child, is told in the most finished piece of all the beautiful story of *Old Mortality*.[1] Among his many beautifully invented names, here is one not invented—very dear to him:—

> "'I wish to speak an instant with one Alison Wilson, who resides here,' said Henry.
>
> "'She's no at hame the day,' answered Mrs. Wilson in propriâ personâ—the state of whose head-dress perhaps inspired her with this direct mode of denying herself—'and ye are but a mislear'd person to speer for her in sic a manner. Ye might have had an M under your belt for Mistress Wilson of Milnwood.'"

Read on, if you forget it, to the end, that third chapter of the last volume of *Old Mortality*.[2] The story of such return to the home of childhood has been told often; but never, so far as I have knowledge, so exquisitely. I do not doubt that Elphin's name is from Sandy-Knowe also; but cannot trace it.

10. Secondly, note his grandfathers' medical treatment of him; for *both* his grandfathers were physicians,—Dr. Rutherford, as we have seen, so professed, by whose advice he is sent to Sandy-Knowe. There, his cattle-dealing grandfather, true physician by diploma of Nature, orders him, whenever the day is fine, to be carried out and laid down beside the old shepherd among the crags or rocks round which he fed his sheep. "The impatience of a child soon inclined me to struggle with my infirmity, and I began by degrees to stand, to walk, and to run. Although the limb affected was much shrunk and contracted, my general health, which was of more importance, was much strengthened by being frequently in the open air; and, in a word, I, *who in a city had probably been condemned to hopeless and helpless*

[1] [For other references to Alison Wilson in *Old Mortality*, see *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 296; and Letter 62, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 518).]

[2] [Ch. xxxix., where Morton is recognised by Alison Wilson by saying, "'Down, Elphin, down.' 'Ye ken our dog's name,' said the old lady."]

*decrepitude* (italics mine), was now a healthy, high-spirited and, my lameness apart, a sturdy child,—non sine di animosus infans."[1]

This, then, is the beginning of Scott's conscious existence,—laid down beside the old shepherd, among the rocks and among the sheep. "He delighted to roll about in the grass all day long in the midst of the flock, and the sort of fellowship he formed with the sheep and lambs impressed his mind with a degree of affectionate feeling towards them which lasted throughout life." *

Such cradle, and such companionship, Heaven gives its favourite children.

11. In 1887, two of the then maid-servants of Sandy-Knowe were still living in its neighbourhood; one of them, Tibby Hunter, remembered the child Scott's coming, well:—

"The young ewe-milkers delighted, she says, to carry him about on their backs among the crags; and he was 'very gleg (quick) at the uptak and soon kenned every sheep and lamb by head-mark as well as any o them.' His great pleasure, however, was in the society of the 'aged hind' recorded in the epistle to Erskine. 'Auld Sandy Ormistoun,' called from the most dignified part of his function, 'the cow-bailie,' had the chief superintendence of the flocks that browsed upon 'the velvet tufts of loveliest green.' If the child saw him in the morning, he could not be satisfied unless the old man would set him astride on his shoulder and take him to keep him company, as he lay watching his charge. . . . The cow-bailie blew a particular note on his whistle which signified to the maid-servants in the house below when the little boy wished to be carried home again."[2]

12. "Every sheep and lamb by head-mark;"—that is our first lesson; not an easy one, you will find it, if you try the flock of such a farm. Only yesterday (12th July, 1878) I saw the dairy of one half filled with the "berry-bread" (large flat-baked cakes enclosing layers of

* His own words to Mr. Skene of Rubislaw, vol. i., p. 83, spoken while Turner was sketching Smailholm Tower, vol. vii., p. 302.

[1] [Lockhart, vol. i. pp. 20, 21. The Latin quotation is from Horace, *Odes*, iv. 4, 20.]

[2] [*Ibid.*, p. 82. The poetic "Epistle to Erskine" is prefixed to Canto Third of *Marmion*; Lockhart's quotation ("velvet tufts") is from it.]

gooseberries) prepared by its mistress for her shearers;—the flock being some six or seven hundred, on Coniston Fells.

That is our first lesson, then, very utterly learned "by heart." This is our second (marginal note on Sir Walter's copy of Allan Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany*, ed. 1724):[1] "This book belonged to my grandfather, Robert Scott, and out of it I was taught 'Hardiknute'* by heart before I could read the ballad myself. It was the first poem I ever learnt, the last I shall ever forget."[2] He repeated a great part of it, in the forests of La Cava, in the spring of the year in which he died; and above the lake Avernus, a piece of the song of the ewe-milkers:—

"Up the craggy mountain, and down the mossy glen,
We canna' go a-milking, for Charlie and his men."[3]

These I say, then, are to be your first lessons. The love, and care, of simplest living creatures; and the remembrance and honour of the dead, with the workmanship for them of fair tombs of song.

18. The Border district of Scotland was at this time, of all districts of the inhabited world, pre-eminently the singing

* The Ballad of Hardiknute is only a fragment—but one consisting of forty-two stanzas of eight lines each. It is the only heroic poem in the Miscellany, of which—and of the poem itself—more hereafter.[4] The first four lines are ominous of Scott's own life:—

"Stately stept he East the wa',
And stately stept he West;
Full seventy years he now had seen,
With scarce seven years of rest."

[1] [Allan Ramsay (the elder), *The Tea-Table Miscellany; or, A Collection of Scots Sangs*, 3 vols., 1724–1727. See, again, Letter 33, § 10 (p. 615). The Ballad of Hardiknute (by Lady Wardlaw, first published in 1719) is in vol. ii. pp. 231–242.]

[2] [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 83.]

[3] [See Lockhart, vol. vii. pp. 356, 357. The lines are from the favourite Jacobite song "Charlie is my Darling." The version of the lines given by James Hogg (*Jacobite Relics of Scotland*, Second Series, 1821, p. 94) differs from that here quoted from Lockhart, and is

"It's up yon heathery mountain,
And down yon scraggy glen,
We daurna gang a-milking
For Charlie and his men."]

[4] [See Letter 33, §§ 9, 10 (pp. 614, 615).]

country,—that which most naturally expressed its noble thoughts and passions in song.

The easily traceable reasons for this character are, I think, the following (many exist, of course, untraceably).

First, distinctly pastoral life, giving the kind of leisure which, in all ages and countries, solaces itself with simple music, if other circumstances are favourable,—that is to say, if the summer air is mild enough to allow repose, and the race has imagination enough to give motive to verse.

The Scottish Lowland air is, in summer, of exquisite clearness and softness,—the heat never so great as to destroy energy, and the shepherd's labour not severe enough to occupy wholly either mind or body. A Swiss herd may have to climb a hot ravine for thousands of feet, or cross a difficult piece of ice, to rescue a lamb, or lead his flock to an isolated pasture. But the borderer's sheep-path on the heath is, to his strong frame, utterly without labour or danger; he is free-hearted and free-footed all the summer day long; in winter darkness and snow finding yet enough to make him grave and stout of heart.

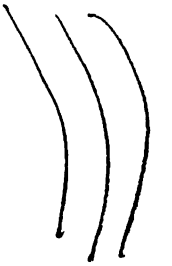
Secondly, the soldier's life, passing gradually, not in cowardice or under foreign conquest, but by his own increasing kindness and sense, into that of the shepherd; thus, without humiliation, leaving the war-wounded past to be recalled for its sorrow and its fame.

Thirdly, the extreme sadness of that past itself: giving pathos and awe to all the imagery and power of Nature.

Fourthly (this a merely physical cause, yet a very notable one), the beauty of the sound of Scottish streams.

14. I know no other waters to be compared with them: —such streams can only exist under very subtle concurrence of rock and climate. There must be much soft rain, not (habitually) tearing the hills down with floods; and the rocks must break irregularly and jaggedly. Our English Yorkshire shales and limestones merely form—carpenter-like —tables and shelves for the rivers to drip and leap from; while the Cumberland and Welsh rocks break too boldly.

and lose the multiplied chords of musical sound. Farther, the loosely-breaking rock must contain hard pebbles, to give the level shore of white shingle, through which the brown water may stray wide, in rippling threads. The fords even of English rivers have given the names to half our prettiest towns and villages (the difference between ford and bridge curiously—if one may let one's fancy loose for a moment—characterizing the difference between the baptism of literature, and the edification of mathematics, in our two great universities); but the pure crystal of the Scottish pebbles,* giving the stream its gradations of amber to the edge, and the sound as of "ravishing division to the lute,"[1] makes the Scottish fords the happiest pieces of all one's day walk.



"The farmhouse itself was small and poor, with a common kailyard on one flank, and a staring barn of the doctor's ('Douglas'[2]) erection on the other; while in front appeared a filthy pond, covered with ducks and duckweed,† from which the whole tenement had derived the unharmonious designation of 'Clarty Hole.'[3] But the Tweed was everything to him: a beautiful river, flowing broad and bright over a bed of milk-white pebbles, unless where, here and there, it darkened into a deep pool, overhung as yet only by the birches and alders which had survived the statelier growth of the primitive forest; and the first hour that he took possession he claimed for his farm the name of the adjoining ford."‡

With the murmur, whisper, and low fall of these streamlets, unmatched for mystery and sweetness, we must remember also the variable, but seldom wild, thrilling of the

* Lockhart, in the extract just below, calls them "milk-white." This is exactly right of the pale bluish translucent quartz, in which the agatescent veins are just traceable, and no more, out of the trap-rocks; but the gneissitic hills give also exquisitely brilliant pure white and cream-coloured quartz, rolled out of their vein stones.

† With your pardon, Mr. Lockhart, neither ducks nor duckweed are in the least derogatory to the purity of a pool.

‡ Vol. ii., p. 358; compare ii., 70. "If it seemed possible to scramble through, he scorned to go ten yards about, and in fact preferred the ford," etc.

[1] [*1 King Henry IV.*, Act iii. sc. 1.]

[2] [This is Ruskin's interpolation, "the doctor" being the Rev. Dr. Robert Douglas, minister of Galashiels, from whom Scott had bought the farm at Abbotsford.]

[3] [See Letter 33, §§ 2, 8, and 18 (pp. 607, 613, 622).]

wind among the recesses of the glens; and, not least, the need of relief from the monotony of occupations involving some rhythmic measure of the beat of foot or hand, during the long evenings at the hearth-side.

15. In the rude lines describing such passing of hours quoted by Scott in his introduction to the *Border Minstrelsy*,* you find the grandmother spinning, with her stool next the hearth,—"for she was old, and saw right dimly" (firelight, observe, all that was needed even then); "she spins to make a web of good Scots linen" (can you show such now, from your Glasgow mills?). The father is pulling hemp (or beating it). The only really beautiful piece of song which I heard at Verona, during several months' stay there in 1869, was the low chant of girls unwinding the cocoons of the silkworm, in the cottages among the olive-clad hills on the north of the city.[1] Never any in the streets of it;—there, only insane shrieks of Republican populace, or senseless dance-music, played by operatic military bands.

16. And one of the most curious points connected with the study of Border-life is this connection of its power of song either with its industry or human love, but never with the religious passion of its "Independent" mind. The definite subject of the piper or minstrel being always war or love (peasant love as much honoured as the proudest), his feeling is steadily antagonistic to Puritanism; and the discordance of Scottish modern psalmody is as unexampled among civilized nations as the sweetness of their ballads—shepherds' or ploughmen's (the plough and pulpit coming into fatalest opposition in Ayrshire); so that Wandering Willie must, as a matter of course, head the troop of Redgauntlet's riotous fishermen with "Merrily danced the

* 8vo, 1806, p. 119.

[1] [For this incident see Ruskin's letter of June 18, 1869, in Vol. XII p. lvii.]

Quaker's wife."[1] And see Wandering Willie's own description of his gudesire:—

"A rambling, rattling chiel he had been, in his young days, and could play weel on the pipes;—he was famous at 'Hoopers and Girders'; a' Cumberland could na touch him at 'Jockie Lattin'; and he had the finest finger for the back-lilt between Berwick and Carlisle;—the like o' Steenie was na the sort they made Whigs o'."[2]

And yet, to this Puritan element, Scott owed quite one of the most noble conditions of his mental life.

17. But it is of no use trying to get on to his aunt Janet in this letter, for there is yet one thing I have to explain to you before I can leave you to meditate, to purpose, over that sorrowful piece of Scott's diary with which it began.

If you had before any thoughtful acquaintance with his general character, or with his writings, but had not studied this close of his life, you cannot but have read with surprise, in the piece of the diary I quoted,[3] the recurring sentences showing the deep wounds of his pride. Your impression of him was, if thoughtfully received, that of a man modest and self-forgetful, even to error. Yet, very evidently, the bitterest pain under his fallen fortune is felt by his pride.

Do you fancy the feeling is only by chance so strongly expressed in that passage?

It is dated 18th December. Now read this:—

"*February 5th*, 1826.—Missie was in the drawing-room, and overheard William Clerk and me laughing excessively at some foolery or other in the back room, to her no small surprise, which she did not keep to herself. But do people suppose that he was less sorry for his poor sister, or I for my lost fortune? If I have a very strong passion in the world, it is pride; and that never hinged upon world's gear, which was always, with me—Light come, light go."[4]

18. You will not at first understand the tone of this last piece, in which two currents of thought run counter, or, at least, one with a back eddy; and you may think Scott

[1] [*Redgauntlet*, ch. iv.]
[2] [*Ibid.*, Letter XI.]
[3] [See above, § 2.]
[4] [Lockhart, vol. vi. p. 209.]

did not know himself, and that his strongest passion was *not* pride; and that he *did* care for world's gear.

Not so, good reader. Never allow your own conceit to betray you into that extremest folly of thinking that you can know a great man better than he knows himself. He may not often wear his heart on his sleeve[1] for you; but when he does, depend upon it, he lets you see deep, and see true.

Scott's ruling passion *was* pride; but it was nobly set—on his honour, and his courage, and his quite conscious intellectual power. The apprehended loss of honour,—the shame of what he thinks in himself cowardice,—or the fear of failure in intellect, are at any time overwhelming to him. But now, he felt that his honour was safe; his courage was, even to himself, satisfying; his sense of intellectual power undiminished; and he had therefore recovered some peace of mind, and power of endurance. The evils he could not have borne, and lived, have not been inflicted on him, and could not be. He can laugh again with his friend:—"but do people suppose that *he* was less sorry for his poor sister, or I for my lost fortune?"

19. What is this loss, then, which he *is* grieving for—as for a lost sister? Not world's gear, "which was always with me, Light come, light go."

Something far other than that.

Read but these three short sentences more,* out of the entries in December and January:—

"My heart clings to the place I have created: there is scarce a tree on it that does not owe its being to me."

"Poor Will Laidlaw—poor Tom Purdie—such news will wring your hearts; and many a poor fellow besides, to whom my prosperity was daily bread."

"I have walked my last on the domains I have planted, sate the last time in the halls I have built. But death would have taken them from me if misfortune had spared them.—My poor people, whom I loved so well!"

* Vol. vi., pp. 164, 166, 196.

[1] [*Othello*, Act i. sc. 1.]

20. Nor did they love him less. You know that his house was left to him, and that his "poor people" served him until his death—or theirs. Hear now *how* they served:—

"The butler," says Lockhart, visiting Abbotsford in 1827, "instead of being the easy chief of a large establishment, was now doing half the work of the house, at probably half his former wages. Old Peter, who had been for five-and-twenty years a dignified coachman, was now ploughman-in-ordinary, only putting his horses to the carriage upon high and rare occasions; and so on with all the rest that remained of the ancient train. And all, to my view, seemed happier than they had ever done before. Their good conduct had given every one of them a new elevation in his own mind; and yet their demeanour had gained, in place of losing, in simple humility of observance. The great loss was that of William Laidlaw, for whom (the estate being all but a fragment in the hands of the trustees and their agent) there was now no occupation here. The cottage which his taste had converted into a loveable retreat had found a rent-paying tenant; and he was living a dozen miles off, on the farm of a relation in the Vale of Yarrow. Every week, however, he came down to have a ramble with Sir Walter over their old haunts, to hear how the pecuniary atmosphere was darkening or brightening, and to read, in every face at Abbotsford, that it could never be itself again until circumstances should permit his re-establishment at Kaeside.

"All this warm and respectful solicitude must have had a preciously soothing influence on the mind of Scott, who may be said to have lived upon love. No man cared less about popular admiration and applause; but for the least chill on the affection of any near and dear to him, he had the sensitiveness of a maiden. I cannot forget, in particular, how his eyes sparkled when he first pointed out to me Peter Mathieson guiding the plough on the haugh. 'Egad,' said he, 'auld Pepe' (this was the children's name for their good friend), 'auld Pepe's whistling at his darg.[1] The honest fellow said a yoking in a deep field would do baith him and the blackies good. If things get round with me, easy shall be Pepe's cushion.'"[2]

21. You see there is not the least question about striking for wages on the part of Sir Walter's servants. The law of supply and demand is not consulted, nor are their wages determined by the great principle of competition—so rustic and absurd are they; not but that

[1] [See Letter 33, § 2 (p. 606); *darg* meaning "a day's work," the word being a syncopated form of *daywerk*.]

[2] [Lockhart, vol. vii. pp. 80, 81.]

they take it on them sometimes to be masters instead of servants:—

"*March* 21.—Wrote till twelve, then out upon the heights, and face the gale bravely. Tom Purdie was not with me; *he would have obliged me to keep the sheltered ground.*" *

You are well past all that kind of thing, you think, and know better how to settle the dispute between Capital and Labour.

"What has that to do with domestic servants?" do you ask? You think a house with a tall chimney, and two or three hundred servants in it, is not properly a house at all; that the sacred words, Domus, Duomo, cannot be applied to it; and that Giotto would have refused to build a Buzzing Tower,[1] by way of belfry, in Lancashire?

Well, perhaps you are right. If you are merely unlucky Williams—borrowing colossal planes[2]—*instead* of true servants, it may well be that Pepe's *own* whistling at his darg must be very impossible for you, only manufactured whistling any more possible. Which are you? *Which will* you be?

22. I am afraid there is little doubt which *you* are;—but there is no doubt whatever which you would like to be, whether you know your own minds or not. You will never whistle at your dargs more, unless you are serving masters whom you can love. You may shorten your hours of labour as much as you please;—no minute of *them will* be merry, till you are serving truly: that is to say, until the bond of constant relationship—service to death—*is* again established between your masters and you. It has been broken by their sin, but may yet be recovered by your virtue. All the best of you cling to the least remnant or shadow of it. I heard but the other day of a foreman, in a large house of business, discharged at a week's warning

* Vol. vii., p. 9. [The italics are Ruskin's.]

[1] [See above, p. 516.]
[2] [See Letter I, §§ 13, 14 (pp. 24–26).]

on account of depression in trade,—who thereupon went to one of the partners, and showed him a letter which he had received a year before, offering him a situation with an increase of his salary by more than a third; which offer he had refused without so much as telling his masters of its being made to him, that he might stay in the old house. He was a Scotchman—and I am glad to tell the story of his fidelity with that of Pepe and Tom Purdie. I know not how it may be in the south; but I know that in Scotland, and the northern border, there still remains something of the feeling which fastened the old French word "loial" among the dearest and sweetest of their familiar speech; and that there are some souls yet among them, who, alike in labour or in rest, abide in, or will depart to, the Land of the Leal.[1]

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*"Sire, moult me plaist vostre escole*
*Et vo noble conseil loial,*
*Ne du trespasser n'ay entente;*
*Sans lui n'aray ne bien ne mal.*
*Amours ce vouloir me présente,*

*Qui veult que tout mon appareil*
*Soit mis à servir soir et main*
*Loiauté, et moult me merveil*
*Comment homs a le cuer si vain*
*Qu'il a à fausseté réclaim."*[2]

[1] [The title of the song by Caroline Oliphant, Baroness Nairne.]

[2] [No. 51 in *Le Livre des Cent Ballades* (see above, p. 263 n.). The old French verses are thus rendered by Mr. Collingwood in his Index to vol. ii. of the Small Edition of *Fors*:—

"Fair Sir, your teaching gladdens me,—
Your noble lore of loyalty,—
Nor thereagainst would I transgress;
Without it hope nor fear I see.
Love lays on me such willingness,

And bids that all my strength be set
Both morn and evening to obey
Loyalty:—and I marvel yet
How heart of man so far away
From faith to faithlessness can stray."]

23. I have been making not a few mistakes in *Fors* lately; and, indeed, am careless enough in it, not solicitous at all to avoid mistakes; for being entirely sure of my main ground, and entirely honest in purpose, I know that I cannot make any mistake which will invalidate my work,[1] and that any chance error which the Third Fors may appoint for me, is often likely to bring out, in its correction, more good than if I had taken the pains to avoid it. Here, for instance, is Dr. Brown's letter, which I should not have had, but for my having confused George's Street with George's Square;[2] and having too shortly generalized my experience of modern novel readers; and it tells me, and you, something about Scott and Dickens which is of the greatest use.

"My dear Friend,—I am rejoiced to see you upon Scott. It will be a permanent good, your having broken this ground. But you are wrong in two things—George's Square is not in the detestable New Town, it is to the *south* of the very Old Town, and near the Meadows.

"Then you say 'nobody now will read them' (Miss Edgeworth and Sir Walter).[3] She is less read than I think she should be, but he is enormously read—here and in America.

"In the twelve months ending June, 1873, Adam Black and his sons have sold over 250,000 *Waverleys*, and I know that when Dickens—that great master of fun and falsetto—went last to America, and there was a fury for him and his books, the sale of them only touched for a short time the ordinary sale of the Scott Novels, and subsided immensely, soon, the Scotts going steadily on increasing. Our young 'genteel' girls and boys, I fear, don't read them as the same class did thirty years ago, but the readers of them, in the body of the people, are immense, and you have only to look at the four or five copies of the whole set in our public libraries to see how they are being read. That is a beautiful drawing of Chantrey's,[4] and new to me,—very like, having the simple, childlike look which he had. The skull is hardly high enough."

24. A subsequent letter tells me that Dinlay is a big hill in Liddesdale;[5] and enclosed (search for it being made) the tune of Sour Plums in Galashiels,[6] of which I will only at present bid you farther observe that it

[1] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii., Preface, § 3 (Vol. V. p. 6).]

[2] [See Letters 31 (§ 6 *n.*) and, above, § 8, pp. 565, 590. The communication had been forwarded to Ruskin through Mr. Allen. "It is a bad *mistake*," wrote Ruskin to him (July 2, 1873), "and there is nothing for it but humble pie."]

[3] [See Letter 31, § 1 (p. 562).]

[4] [Plate XIII.; see above (p. 562 *n*).]

[5] [See Letter 31, § 7 *n.* (p. 566).

[6] [See Letter 31, § 22 (p. 582).]

is the first "touch of the auld bread-winner" that Wandering Willie plays to Darsie.[1]

25. Another valued correspondent reminds me that people might get hold of my having spoken, a good many numbers back, of low sunshine "at six o'clock on an October morning";[2] and truly enough it must have been well on towards seven.

26. A more serious, but again more profitable, mistake, was made in the June *Fors*, by the correspondent (a working man) who sent me the examination paper, arranged from a Kensington one, from which I quoted the four questions,[3]—who either did not know, or did not notice, the difference between St. Matthew and St. Matthias. The paper had been set in the schools of St. Matthew, and the chairman of the committee of the schools of St. Matthias wrote to me in violent indignation—little thinking how greatly pleased I should be to hear of *any* school in which Kensington questions were not asked,—or if asked, were not likely to be answered.

I find even that the St. Matthias children *could* in all probability answer the questions I proposed as alternative,—for they have flower shows, and prizes presented by Bishops, and appear to be quite in an exemplary phase of education: all which it is very pleasant to me to learn. (Apropos of the equivoque between St. Matthew and St. Matthias, another correspondent puts me in mind of the promise I made to find out for you who St. Pancras was.[4] I did; but did not much care to tell you—for I had put him with St. Paul only because both their names began with P;[5] and found that he was an impertinent youth of sixteen, who ought to have been learning to ride and swim, and took to theology instead, and was made a martyr of, and had that mock-Greek church built to his Christian honour in Mary-le-bone. I have no respect whatever for boy or girl martyrs;—we old men know the value of the dregs of life: but young people will throw the whole of it away for a freak, or in a pet at losing a toy.)

27. I suppose I shall next have a fiery letter abjuring Kensington from the committee of the schools of St. Matthew:—nothing could possibly give me greater pleasure. I did not, indeed, intend for some time to give you any serious talk about Kensington, and then I meant to give it you in large print—and at length; but as this matter has been "forced" upon me (note the power of the word Fors in the first syllable of that word) I will say a word or two now.

I have lying beside me on my table, in a bright orange cover, the seventh edition of the "Young Mechanic's Instructor; or, Workman's Guide to the various Arts connected with the Building Trades; showing how to strike out all kinds of Arches and Gothic Points, to set out and construct Skew Bridges; with numerous Illustrations of Foundations, Sections, Elevations, etc. Receipts, Rules, and Instructions in the art of Casting,

[1] [*Redgauntlet*, Letter X.]
[2] [See Letter 15, § 10 (p. 266).]
[3] [See Letter 30, § 9 (p. 558).]
[4] [See Letter 27, § 4 (p. 492).]
[5] [Compare above, p. 400.]

Modelling, Carving, Gilding, Dyeing, Staining, Polishing, Bronzing, Lacquering, Japanning, Enamelling, Gasfitting, Plumbing, Glazing, Painting, etc. Jewellers' Secrets, Miscellaneous Receipts, Useful Tables, etc., and a variety of useful information designed specially for the Working Mechanic.—London: Brodie and Middleton, 79, Long Acre; and all Booksellers in Town and Country. Price, 2s. 6d."[1]

From pages 11, 20, and 21 of the introduction to this work, I quote the following observations on St. Paul's, the Nineveh sculptures, and the Houses of Parliament.

### I.—OF ST. PAUL'S

"Since London was first built, which we are led to believe was about the year 50, by the Romans, there has not been a more magnificent building erected in it than St. Paul's—this stupendous edifice which absorbs the attention, and strikes with wonder all who behold it, was founded by Ethelbert, the fifth King of Kent, in the year 604 A.D. And it is certain that since the completion of this building, succeeding generations have made no progress in the construction of public buildings."

### II.—OF THE NINEVEH SCULPTURES

"There is one feature in the Nineveh sculptures which most beautifully illustrates and corroborates the truth of the Scriptures; any person who has carefully read the Scriptures, and has seen the Nineveh sculptures, cannot fail to see the beautiful illustration; it will be remembered that the king is spoken of in many places as riding in his chariot, and of[2] the king's armour-bearer following him to the battle. In the Nineveh sculptures you will see the fact exemplified—the king in his chariot, and his armour-bearer defending him with his shield."

### III.—OF THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

"Of all the Gothic buildings that we have in our country, both of ancient and modern date, the Houses of Parliament are the best and most elaborate; the first step of its grandeur is, that it stands parallel to the majestic stream of the River Thames, and owing to its proximate distance to the river, there is no thoroughfare between it and the water; its open situation gives it a sublime view from the opposite side; but especially from Westminster Bridge its aspect is grand and magnificent in the extreme. Its superb tracery glitters in the distance, in the sight of the spectator, like the yellow autumnal foliage of some picturesque grove which beautifies the verdant valleys and bedecks the silvery hills. The majestic figures in their stately order, encanopied in their Gothic palaces, bring to our remembrance the noble patriarchs of old, or the patriots of recent days. Its numerous pinnacles, turrets, and towers, rise up into the smoky and blue atmosphere like forest trees, which will stand as an everlasting memento of the great and noble-minded generation who raised this grand and magnificent structure, so that after-generations may say, 'Surely our forefathers were great and illustrious men, that they had reached the climax of human skill, so that we cannot improve on their superb and princely buildings.'"

These three extracts, though in an extreme degree, are absolutely and accurately characteristic of the sort of mind, unexampled in any former

[1] [By C. Allen; first published in 1863.]
[2] [The words do not read grammatically; but Ruskin's citation is accurate.]

ages for its conceit, its hypocrisy, and its sevenfold—or rather seventy times sevenfold—ignorance, the dregs of corrupted knowledge, which modern art-teaching, centralized by Kensington, produces in our workmen and their practical "guides." How it is produced, and how the torturing examinations as to the possible position of the letters in the word Chillian-wallah,[1] and the collection of costly objects of art from all quarters of the world, end in these conditions of paralysed brain and corrupted heart, I will show you at length in a future letter.[2]

[1] [See Letter 30, § 9 (p. 558).]

[2] [No future letter was devoted expressly to this subject; but for other references to the "Science and Art Department," connected with the South Kensington Museum, see above, pp. 20, 159; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 256–257, 300, 407, 435; and Vol. XXIX. p. 154.]

## LETTER 33

### AUNT JESSIE[1]

1. I FIND some of my readers are more interested in the last two numbers of *Fors* than I want them to be.

"Give up your *Fors* altogether, and let us have a life of Scott," they say.[2]

They must please to remember that I am only examining the conditions of the life of this wise man, that they may learn how to rule their own lives, or their children's, or their servants'; and, for the present, with this particular object, that they may be able to determine, for themselves, whether ancient sentiment, or modern common-sense,[3] is to be the rule of life, and of service.

I beg them, therefore, to refer constantly to that summary of modern common-sense given by Mr. Applegarth, and quoted with due commendation by the *Pall Mall Gazette* (above, 28, § 22):—

> "One piece of vigorous good sense enlivened the discussion. It was uttered by Mr. Applegarth, who observed that 'no sentiment ought to be brought into the subject.'"

No sentiment, you observe, is to be brought into your doing, or your whistling, according to Mr. Applegarth.

2. And the main purpose of *Fors* is to show you that there is, sometimes, in weak natural whistling quite as much virtue as in vigorous steam whistling.[4] But it cannot show you this without explaining what your darg, or

[1] [See above, p. 581 *n.*]

[2] [That Ruskin had some sort of idea of writing a Life of Scott appears from a passage (which, however, is ironical) in the Introduction to *Deucalion* (*Vol. XXVI.* p. 96).]

[3] [Ruskin in his copy writes beside these words, "Ironical, but not marked enough as such."]

[4] [Compare Letters 5, § 11, and 32, § 20 (pp. 89, 599).]

"doing," *is;* which cannot be shown merely by writing pleasant biographies. You are always willing enough to *read* lives, but never willing to *lead* them. For instance, those few sentences, almost casually given in last *Fors*, about the Scottish rivers,[1] have been copied, I see, into various journals, as if they, at any rate, were worth extract from the much useless matter of my books. Scotchmen like to hear their rivers talked about, it appears! But when last I was up Huntley Burn way,[2] there was no burn there. It had all been drawn off to somebody's "works"; and it is painful for me, as an author, to reflect that, "of all polluting liquids belonging to this category (liquid refuse from manufactories), the discharges from paper works are the most difficult to deal with." *

At Edinburgh there is a railroad station instead of the North Loch; the Water of Leith is—well, one cannot say in civilized company what it is; † and at Linlithgow,—of all the palaces so fair,—built for a royal dwelling, etc.,[3]—the oil (paraffin), floating on the streams, can be ignited, burning with a large flame. ‡

My good Scottish friends, had you not better leave off pleasing yourselves with descriptions of your rivers as they were, and consider what your rivers are to be? For I correct my derivation of Clarty Hole too sorrowfully. § It is the *Ford* that is clarty now—not the Hole.[4]

* Fourth Report of Rivers Pollution Commission, p. 62.[5]

† See Analysis of Water of Leith, the Foul Burn, and Pow Burn, same Report, p. 21.

‡ Same Report; so also the River Almond, pp. 22–45.

§ See terminal notes [p. 622].

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[1] [Letter 32, § 14 (p. 594).]

[2] [In 1867: see Vol. XIX. pp. xxviii., xxix.]

[3] ["Of all the palaces so fair
Built for the royal dwelling
In Scotland, far beyond compare
Linlithgow is excelling."
—Scott: *Marmion*, canto iv., 15.]

[4] [See Letter 32, § 14 (p. 595); and for the meaning of "clarty," p. 622 *n.*]

[5] [*Fourth Report of the Commissioners appointed in 1868 to Inquire into the Best Means of Preventing the Pollution of Rivers: Pollution of Rivers of Scotland. 1872.*]

3. To return to our sentimental work, however, fo while. I left in my last letter one or two of the n interesting points in the first year at Sandy-Knowe noticed, because I thought it best to give you, by co parison with each other, some idea of the three wom who, as far as education could do it, formed the m of Scott. His masters only polished and directed it. I mother, grandmother, and aunt welded the steel.

Hear first this of his mother (Lockhart, vol. i., p. 78):

"She had received, as became the daughter of an eminently learn physician, the best sort of education then bestowed on young gentlewome in Scotland. The poet, speaking of Mrs. Euphemia Sinclair, the mistre of the school at which his mother was reared, to the ingenious local anc quary, Mr. Robert Chambers, said that 'she must have been possessed uncommon talents for education, as all her young ladies were, in after life, fond of reading, wrote and spelled admirably, were well acquainte with history and the belles lettres, without neglecting the more home duties of the needle and accompt-book, and perfectly well-bred in society Mr. Chambers adds, 'Sir Walter further communicated that his mother, an many others of Mrs. Sinclair's pupils, were sent afterwards to be finished by the Honourable Mrs. Ogilvie, a lady who trained her young friends t a style of manners which would now be considered intolerably stiff. Such was the effect of this early training upon the mind of Mrs. Scott, that even when she approached her eightieth year, she took as much care to avoid touching her chair with her back, as if she had still been under the stern eye of Mrs. Ogilvie.'"

4. You are to note in this extract three things. First the singular influence of education, given by a master or mistress of real power. "All her young ladies" (*all*, Sir Walter! do you verily mean this?) "fond of reading," and so forth.

Well, I believe that, with slight exception, Sir Walter *did* mean it. He seldom wrote, or spoke, in careless generalization. And I doubt not that it is truly possible, by first insisting on a girl's really knowing how to read, and then by allowing her very few books, and *those* absolutely wholesome,—and not amusing!—to give her a healthy appetite for reading. Spelling, I had thought was impossible to many girls; but perhaps this is only

because it is not early enough made a point of: it cannot be learned late.

Secondly: I wish Mr. Chambers had given us Sir Walter's words, instead of only the substance of what he "further communicated." But you may safely gather what I want you to notice, that Sir Walter attributes the essentials of good breeding to the first careful and scholarly mistress; and only the formality, which he somewhat hesitatingly approves, to the finishing hand of Mrs. Ogilvie. He would have paid less regard to the opinion of modern society on such matters, had he lived to see our languid Paradise of sofas and rocking-chairs. The beginning, and very nearly the end, of bodily education for a girl, is to make sure that she can stand, and sit, upright; the ankle vertical, and firm as a marble shaft; the waist elastic as a reed, and as unfatiguable.* I have seen my own mother travel from sunrise to sunset, in a summer's day, without once leaning back in the carriage.

Thirdly: The respectability belonging in those days to the profession of a schoolmistress. In fact, I do not myself think that any old lady *can* be respectable, unless she *is* one, whether she be paid for her pupils or not. And to deserve to be one, makes her Honourable at once, titled or untitled.

5. This much comes, then, of the instructions of Mrs. Sinclair and Mrs. Ogilvie; and why should not all your daughters be educated by Honourable Mrs. Ogilvies, and learn to spell, and to sit upright? Then they will all have sons like Sir Walter Scott, you think?

Not so, good friends. Miss Rutherford had not wholly learned to sit upright from Mrs. Ogilvie. She had some disposition of her own in that kind, different from the other pupils, and taught in older schools. Look at the lines in the *Lay*, where Conrad of Wolfenstein—

* "I ought to have dwelt more on the carrying pitchers or other burdens on the head, and on uprightness and elasticity of grace in moral character." —*Author's MS. note.*

"In humour highly crossed
About some steeds his band had lost,
High words to words succeeding still,
Smote with his gauntlet stout Hunthill;
A hot and hardy Rutherford,
Whom men call Dickon Draw-the-Sword.
Stern Rutherford right little said,
But bit his glove, and shook his head.—
A fortnight thence, in Inglewood,
Stout Conrad, cold and drenched in blood,
His bosom gored with many a wound,
Was by a woodman's lyme-dog * found;
Unknown the manner of his death,
Gone was his brand, both sword and sheath;
But ever from that time, 'twas said
That Dickon wore a Cologne blade." [1]

6. Such the race,—such the school education,—of Scott mother. Of her home education, you may judge by wha she herself said of her father to her son's tutor (whos exquisitely grotesque letter, for the rest, vol. i., p. 10 is alone enough to explain Scott's inevitable future per ception of the weakness of religious egotism): [2]

"Mrs. Scott told me that, when prescribing for his patients, it wa Dr. Rutherford's custom to offer up, at the same time, a prayer for th accompanying blessing of heaven,—a laudable practice, in which, I fear, h has not been generally imitated by those of his profession."

A very laudable practice indeed, good Mr. Mitchell perhaps even a useful and practically efficacious one, c

* Blood-hound, from "lym," Saxon for leash.

[1] [*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto vi. stanza vii.]

[2] [Mr. James Mitchell, "tutor in Mr. Walter Scott's family," whose letter a reminiscences is given by Lockhart, vol. i. pp. 106–114.]

[3] [Ruskin's meaning in this passage has been seriously perverted by a misprint or officious correction, in all editions subsequent to the first. Ed. 1 reads: "... her son's tutor (whose exquisitely grotesque letter, for the rest, vol. i. p. 108 alone enough . . . religious egotism." Obviously the second bracket was m placed and should have come after "egotism." Mr. Mitchell's letter (as any on can see by reference to its text in Lockhart) is full in other respects of "exquisite grotesque" religious egotism, but Mr. Mitchell's commendation of Dr. Rutherford' practice of prayer is endorsed by Ruskin. Some corrector for the press, however failing to perceive the misplacement of the bracket, altered the text as follows "... her son's tutor (whose exquisitely grotesque letter, for the rest, vol. p. 108), *which* is alone enough . . . religious egotism"—thus making Ruskin s that the doctor's practice of prayer was alone enough, etc.! For Scott's own account of his tutor's fanaticism, see Lockhart, i. 30.]

occasion; at all events one of the last remains of noble Puritanism, in its sincerity, among men of sound learning.

For Dr. Rutherford was also an excellent linguist, and, according to the custom of the times, delivered his prelections to the students in Latin (like the conversation in Beardie's Jacobite Club[1]). Nowadays, you mean to have no more Latin talked, as I understand; no prayers said. Pills—Morison's and others—can be made up on cheaper terms, you think,[2]—and be equally salutary?

Be it so. In these ancient manners, however, Scott's mother is brought up, and consistently abides; doubtless, having some reverence for the Latin tongue, and much faith in the medicine of prayer:—having had troubles about her soul's safety also; perhaps too solicitous, at one time, on that point; but being sure she has a soul to be solicitous about, which is much; obedient herself to the severest laws of morality and life; mildly and steadily enforcing them on her children; but naturally of light and happy temper, and with a strong turn to study poetry and works of imagination.

7. I do not say anything of his father till we come[3] to the apprenticeship,—except only that he was no less devout than his mother, and more formal. Of training which could be known or remembered, neither he nor the mother gives any to their boy until after the Sandy-Knowe time. But how of the unremembered training? When do you suppose the education of a child begins? At six months old it can answer smile with smile, and impatience with impatience. It can observe, enjoy, and suffer, acutely, and, in a measure, intelligently. Do you suppose it makes no difference to it that the order of the house is perfect and quiet, the faces of its father and mother full of peace, their soft voices

[1] [See Letter 31, § 12 (p. 574).]

[2] [James Morison (1770–1840), self-styled "the Hygeist," vendor and advertiser of the once famous "Morison's pills." See book i. ch. iv. ("Morison's Pill") of Carlyle's *Past and Present*: "Brothers, I am sorry I have got no Morison's Pill for curing the maladies of Society."]

[3] [This point, however, was not reached in *Fors*; but in Letter 47 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 191) Ruskin points out that Saunders Fairford in *Redgauntlet* is Scott's father.]

familiar to its ear,[1] and even those of strangers, loving that it is tossed from arm to arm, among hard, or reck or vain-minded persons, in the gloom of a vicious ho hold, or the confusion of a gay one? The moral disposi is, I doubt not, greatly determined in those first speech years. I believe especially that quiet, and the withdra of objects likely to distract, by amusing, the child, so a let it fix its attention undisturbed on every visible le thing in its domain, is essential to the formation of sc of the best powers of thought.[2] It is chiefly to this quiet of his own home that I ascribe the intense perceptiven and memory of the three-years'-old child at Sandy-Know for, observe, it is in that first year he learns his Hardiknut by his aunt's help he learns to read at Bath,[3] and can ca for himself on his return. Of this aunt, and her moth we must now know what we can. You notice the diff ence which Scott himself indicates between the two: "M grandmother, who was meekness itself, and my aunt, wh was of a higher temper."[4] Yet his grandmother, Barba Haliburton, was descended from the so-called, in special of honour, "Standard-bearer" of the Douglases; and Dry burgh Abbey was part of her family's estate, they havin been true servants to the monks of it, once on a time. Here is a curious little piece of lecture on the duties o master and servant,—Royal Proclamation on the 8th o May, 1585, by James the Fifth:*—

"Whereas we, having been advised, and knowing the said gentlem the Halliburtons, to be *leal* and *true* honest men, long servants unto th saide abbeye, for the saide landis, stout men at armes, and *goode borderer* against Ingland; and doe therefore decree and ordaine, that they sha be re-possess'd, and bruik and enjoy the landis and steedings they had the said abbeye, paying the use and wonte: and that they sall be good servants to the said venerabil father, like as they and their predecessors

* Introduction to *Border Minstrelsy*, p. 86.

[1] [For Ruskin's reminiscences of his own childhood in this respect, see *Letter* 8 § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 349).]

[2] [Here, again, Ruskin is thinking of his own childhood: see Letter 61, § (Vol. XXVIII. p. 272).]

[3] [For his learning the ballad of Hardiknute, see above, Letter 32, § 12, p. 48 and see Lockhart, vol. i. p. 21.]

[4] [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 25.]

ere to the said venerabil father, and his predecessours, and he a good aster to them."

The Abbot of Dryburgh, however, and others in such high places, having thus misread their orders, and taken on themselves to be masters instead of ministers, the Reformation took its course; and Dryburgh claims allegiance no more—but to its dead.

8. You notice the phrase, "good borderers against England." Lest I should have to put it off too long, I may as well, in this place, let you know the origin of the tune which Scott's uncle was so fond of.[1] From the letter of one of his friends to Dr. Brown I gratefully take the following passage:—

"In the fourteenth century some English riders were slaking their thirst on the banks of the Tweed, nearly opposite Cartley Hole,—now Abbotsford,—where wild plums grew. The borderers came down upon them unexpectedly, and annihilated them, driving some into the Tweed, at a place called the Englishman's Dyke. The borderers accordingly thought their surprise sourer fruit to the invaders than the plums they went to pluck, and christened themselves by the soubriquet of 'Sour Plums in Galashiels,' which gave a text for the song and tune, and a motto for the arms of the town of Galashiels."

There is something to think of for you, when next you see the blackthorn blow, or the azure bloom spread on its bossed clusters of fruit. I cannot find any of the words of the song;[2] but one beautiful stanza of the ballad of Cospatrick[3] may at least serve to remind you of the beauty of the Border in its summer time:—

"For to the greenwood I maun gae
To pu' the red rose and the slae,
To pu' the red rose and the thyme,
To deck my mother's bour and mine."

[1] [See Letter 31, § 22 (p. 582).]

[2] [Galashiels has long been famous for its damsons. The motto of the town is "Soor Plooms," and its arms a plum-tree fructed, between two foxes. There is a story that certain of the men of Sir Ralph Evers, who had plundered its orchards, were seized with pain, and in that condition fallen on and annihilated by Pringle of Gala, in a spot between the town and the foot of the Gala Water, hence called "The Englishman's Dyke." This is the account of the town arms given by Mr. Craig-Brown in his *History of Selkirkshire*, p. 478. But upon the town seal the tree represented is a grape-bearing vine, and it has been suggested that the original seal was a classical gem representing Æsop's fox and grapes (see *The Arms of the Royal and Parliamentary Burghs of Scotland*, by John, Marquis of Bute, 1897, p. 157).]

[3] [Printed by Scott in his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*: see vol. iii. p. 56.]

9. "Meekness itself," and yet possibly with some pride in her also, this Barbara, with the ruins of her Dryburgh still seen grey above the woods, from the tower at whose foot her grandchild was playing. So short the space he had to travel, when his lameness should be cured,—the end of all travel already in sight!

Some pride in her, perhaps: you need not be surprised her grandchild should have a little left.

"Many a tale" (she told him) "of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood (Oakwood), Jamie Telfer of the fair Dodhead, and other heroes —merry men, all of the persuasion and calling of Robin Hood and Little John. A more recent hero, but not of less note, was the celebrated De'il of Little Dean, whom she well remembered, as he had married her mother's sister. Of this extraordinary person I learned many a story—grave and gay, comic and warlike"—(dearest, meek, grandmamma!).

"Two or three old books which lay in the window-seat were explored for my amusement in the tedious winter days. *Automathes* * and Ramsay's *Tea-table Miscellany* were my favourites, although, at a later period, an odd volume of Josephus's *Wars of the Jews* divided my partiality."[1]

10. "Two or three old books in the window-seat," and "an odd volume of Josephus." How entertaining our farm library! (with the Bible, you observe) and think how much matters have changed for the better: your package down from Mudie's monthly with all the new magazines, and a dozen of novels; Good Words—as many as you choose,—and Professor Tyndall's last views on the subject of the Regelation of Ice.[2] (Respecting which, for the sake of Scott's first love,[3] and for the sake also of my own first love—which was of snow, even more than water,—I have a few words to say to Professor Tyndall, but they must be

* "The Capacity and Extent of the Human Understanding; exemplified in the extraordinary case of Automathes, a young nobleman who was accidentally left in his infancy upon a desolate island, and continued nineteen years in that solitary state, separate from all human society." By John Kirkby. 1745. Small 8vo.

[1] [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 18.]

[2] [Tyndall's *Forms of Water* had just been published: see Vol. XXVI. p. 280.]

[3] [Ruskin defers (at p. 636) his explanation of the point of connexion between glacier theories and the life of Scott, and he did not afterwards give it. His point was that J. D. Forbes, whose glacier-theory he was bent on defending against Tyndall, was a son of Scott's "first love" (see above, p. 585 n., and J. C. Shairp's *Life and Letters of J. D. Forbes*, 1873, p. 4). For Ruskin's early love of rocks and rivers, see above, p. 331.]

for next month, as they will bitterly interrupt our sentimental proceedings.[1])

Nay—with your professional information that when ice breaks you can stick it together again, you have also imaginative literature of the rarest. Here—instead of Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany*,[2] with its Hardiknute and other ballads of softer tendency,—some of them not the best of their kind, I admit,—here you have Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, M.P.'s,[3] *Tales at Tea-Time*,* dedicated to the schoolroom teapot, in which the first story is of the "Pea Green Nose," and in which (opening at random) I find it related of some Mary of our modern St. Mary's Lochs,[4] that "Mary stepped forward hastily, when one of the lobsters sprang forward, and seized her arm in his claw, saying, in a low, agitated, tone of voice," etc., etc.

11. You were better off, little as you think it, with that poor library on the window-seat. Your own, at worst,

* It is impossible to concentrate the vulgar modern vices of art and literature more densely than has been done in this—in such kind, documental—book. Here is a description of the "Queen of the Flowers" out of it, which is so accurately characteristic of the "imagination" of an age of demand and supply, that I must find space for it in small print. She appears in a wood in which "here and there was a mulberry tree *disporting* itself among the rest." (Has Mr. Hugessen, M.P., ever seen a mulberry tree, or read as much of Pyramus and Thisbe as Bottom?)

"The face was the face of a lady, and of a pretty, exceedingly good-humoured lady too; but the hair which hung down around her head" (the author had better have written hung *up*) "was nothing more or less than festoons of roses,—red, lovely, sweet-scented" (who would have thought it?) "roses; the arms were apparently entirely composed of cloves and" (allspice! no) "carnations; the body was formed of a multitude of various flowers—the most beautiful you can imagine, and a cloak of honeysuckle and sweet-briar was thrown *carefully* over the shoulders." (Italics mine—care being as characteristic of the growth of the honeysuckle as disport is that of the mulberry.)

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[1] [See Letter 34, §§ 11 *seq.* (p. 635).]

[2] [See above, p. 593 n.]

[3] [*Tales at Tea-Time. Fairy Stories*, by E. H. Knatchbull-Hugessen, M.P. (afterwards Lord Brabourne). Illustrated by William Brunton. Ruskin quotes from pp. 95 (the story of "The River King"), 169 ("Sybil's Vision"). For another reference to the story of the mulberry, and Pyramus and Thisbe, see Vol. XVIII. p. 367.]

[4] [For St. Mary's Loch (the reservoir which feeds the stream of Yarrow), see Introduction to Canto Second of *Marmion*.]

though much fingered and torn;—your own mentally, still more utterly; and though the volume be odd, do you think that, by any quantity of reading, you can make your knowledge of history, even?

You are so proud of having learned to read too, and I warrant you could not read so much as Barbara Haliburton's shield: Or, on a bend azure, three mascles of the first; in the second quarter a buckle of the second.

12. I meant to have engraved it, but shall never get on to aunt Jessie at this rate.

> "My kind and affectionate aunt, Miss Janet Scott, whose memory will ever be dear to me, used to read these works to me, with admirable patience, until I could repeat long passages by heart."[1]

Why admirable, Sir Walter? Surely she might have spent her time more usefully—lucratively at least—than in this manner of "nursing the baby."[2] Might you not have been safely left, to hunt up Hardiknute, in maturer years, for yourself?

By no manner of means, Sir Walter thinks; and justly. With all his gifts, but for this aunt Janet,—for his mother,—and for Lilias Redgauntlet,[3]—he had assuredly been only hunting laird, and the best story-teller in the Lothians.

13. We scarcely ever, in our study of education, ask this most essential of all questions about a man, What *patience* had his mother or sister with him?

And most men are apt to forget it themselves. Pardon me for speaking of myself for a moment (if I did not know things by my own part in them, I would not write of them at all[4]). You know that people sometimes call me a good writer:[5] others like to hear me speak. I seldom mis-spell or mis-pronounce a word, grossly; and can generally say what I want to say. Well, my own impression about

[1] [Lockhart, vol. i. pp. 18, 19.]
[2] [See Letter 24, § 20 (p. 431).]
[3] [See above, p. 585 *n.*]
[4] [In this connexion, see the passage in Appendix 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 539).]
[5] [Compare above, p. 400.]

this power, such as it may be, is that it was born with me, or gradually gained by my own study. It is only by deliberate effort that I recall the long morning hours of toil, as regular as sunrise,—toil on both sides equal,—by which, year after year, my mother forced me to learn all the Scotch paraphrases by heart, and ever so many chapters of the Bible besides (the eighth of 1st Kings being one,—try it, good reader, in a leisure hour!) allowing not so much as a syllable to be missed or misplaced; while every sentence was required to be said over and over again till she was satisfied with the accent of it. I recollect a struggle between us of about three weeks, concerning the accent of the "of" in the lines

> "Shall any following spring revive
> The ashes of the urn?"[1]

I insisting, partly in childish obstinacy, and partly in true instinct for rhythm, (being wholly careless on the subject both of urns and their contents[2]), on reciting it, "The ashes *of* the urn." It was not, I say, till after three weeks' labour, that my mother got the accent laid upon the ashes, to her mind. But had it taken three years, she would have done it, having once undertaken to do it. And, assuredly, had she not done it, I had been simply an avaricious picture collector, or perhaps even a more avaricious money collector, to this day; and had she done it wrongly, no after-study would ever have enabled me to read so much as a single line of verse.[3]

14. It is impossible, either in history or biography, to

[1] [Ruskin quotes from No. viii. (Job xiv. 1–15) of the "Translations and Paraphrases, in Verse, collected and prepared by a Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in order to be sung in Churches." The lines are the composition of John Logan (see his piece beginning "When chill the blast of winter blows"), who was one of the committee appointed in 1775 to revise the "Translations and Paraphrases."]

[2] [Ruskin is here thinking of another experience of his childhood: see "The Story of Arachne," § 3 (Vol. XX. p. 372).]

[3] [The latter portion of § 13 of this letter was used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where it appears, slightly revised, as § 47 of vol. i. ch. ii. His autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 42, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 101).]

arrange what one wants to insist upon wholly by time, a wholly by rational connection. You must observe that the visit to England, of which I am now going to speak, interrupts, with a brilliant display of pyrotechnic light, the steady burning of the stars above Scott's childhood. From the teaching of his aunt, *before* he could read, I should like, for several reasons, to go on at once to the teaching of his mother, *after* he could read; but I must content myself, for the moment, with adding the catalogue of mamma's library to that of aunt Jessie's. On the window-seat of Sandy-Knowe—only to be got at the pith of by help of auntie—we had the odd volume of Josephus. *Automathes*, and two or three old books not named. A year later, mamma provides for us—now scholars ourselves—Pope's *Homer*, Allan Ramsay's *Evergreen*, and, for Sundays, Bunyan, Gesner's *Death of Abel*, and Rowe's (Mrs.) *Letters from the Other World*.[1]

15. But we have made our grand tour in the meantime, and have some new ideas of *this* world in our head; of which the reader must now consider:

"I was in my fourth year when my father was advised that the Bath waters might be of some advantage to my lameness. My affectionate aunt—although such a journey promised to a person of her retired habits anything but pleasure or amusement—undertook as readily to accompany me to the wells of Bladud, as if she had expected all the delight that ever the prospect of a watering-place held out to its most impatient visitants."[2]

And why should she not? Does it not seem somewhat strange to you, from what you know of young, or even middle-aged, aunt Jessies of the present day, that Miss Scott should look upon the journey to Bath as so severe a piece of self-denial; and that her nephew regards her doing so as a matter of course?

How old was aunt Jessie, think you? Scott's father, the eldest of a large family, was born in 1729,—in this year, therefore, was forty-six. If we uncharitably suppose Miss Jessie the next oldest, she would be precisely of the age of

[1] [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 20.]
[2] [*Ibid.*, p. 26.]

Mrs. Tabitha Bramble; and one could fancy her, it seems to me, on the occasion of this unforeseen trip to the most fashionable watering-place in England, putting up her "rose-collard neglegay with green robins, and her bloo quilted petticot,"[1] without feeling herself in the position of a martyr led to the stake. But aunt Jessie must really have been much younger than Mrs. Tabitha, and have had the advantage of her in other particulars besides spelling. She was afterwards married, and when Lockhart saw her (1820?)—forty years or so after this—had still "the softest eye and the sweetest voice."[2] And from the thatched mansion of the moorland, Miss Jessie feels it so irksome and solemn a duty—does she?—to go to "the square, the circus, and the parades, which put *you*" (Miss Lydia Melford) "in mind of the sumptuous palaces represented in prints and pictures; and the new buildings, such as Prince's Row, Harlequin's Row, Bladud's Row, and twenty other rows besides,"[3]—not to speak of a real pump in a pump-room, with a handle to it, and other machinery, instead of the unpumped Tweed!

Her nephew, however, judges her rightly. Aunt Jessie could give him no truer proof of faithful affection than in the serenity with which she resolves to take him to this centre of gaiety.

Whereupon, you are to note this, that the end of all right education for a woman is to make her love her home better than any other place; that she should as seldom leave it as a queen her queendom; nor ever feel entirely at rest but within its threshold.

16. For her boy, however, there are things to be seen in Bath, and to be learned:

> "I acquired the rudiments of reading from an old dame near our lodgings, and I had never a more regular teacher, though I think I did not attend her more than a quarter of a year. An occasional lesson from my aunt supplied the rest."[4]

[1] [*Humphry Clinker* (the second letter). Mistress Tabitha Bramble was "a maiden of 45" (the fourth letter).]
[2] [See the passage from Lockhart quoted on p. 582.]
[3] [*Humphry Clinker* (Roscoe's edition, 1831, p. 43).]
[4] [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 21.]

Yes, little Walter. If we indeed have a mind to our book, that is all the teaching we want; we shall perhaps get through a volume or two in time.

"The circumstances I recollect of my residence in Bath are but trifling yet I never recall them without a feeling of pleasure. The beauties of the Parade (which of them I know not), with the river Avon winding around it, and the lowing of the cattle from the opposite hills, are warm in my recollection, and are only rivalled by the splendours of a toy-shop somewhere near the Orange Grove. I had acquired, I know not by what means a kind of superstitious terror for statuary of all kinds. No ancient Iconoclast or modern Calvinist could have looked on the outside of the Abbey Church (if I mistake not the principal church at Bath is so called), with more horror than the image of Jacob's Ladder, with all its angels, presented to my infant eye. My uncle * effectually combated my terrors, and formally introduced me to a statue of Neptune, which perhaps still keeps guard on the side of the Avon, where a pleasure-boat crosses to Spring Gardens."[1]

"A sweet retreat"—Spring Gardens (again I quote Miss Lydia)—"laid out in walks, and ponds, and parterres of flowers, and hard by the Pump-room is a coffee-house for the ladies, but my aunt says young girls are not admitted inasmuch as the conversation turns upon politics, scandal, philosophy, and other subjects above our capacity."[2] Is aunt Janet old enough and clever enough for the company, I wonder? And Walter—what toys did he mostly covet in the Orange Grove?

17. The passage about the effect of sculpture upon him is intensely interesting to me, partly as an indication of the state of his own nascent imagination, partly as illustrative of the power of religious sculpture, *meant* to terrify, on the minds of peasant children of high faculty. But I cannot dwell on this point here: I must get on to his first sight of a play. The Third Fors—still favourable to him—appoints it to be *As You Like It*.

A never-to-be-forgotten delight, influencing him in his whole nature thenceforward. It is uncle Robert's doing

* Robert, who comes to visit them in Bath, to little Walter's great joy

[1] [Lockhart, vol. i. pp. 22, 23.]
[2] [*Humphry Clinker* (Roscoe's edition, 1831, p. 45).]

this,[1] aunt Jessie having probably been doubtful on the matter, but irresistibly coaxed. Uncle Robert has much to answer for! How much, I can't tell you to-day; nor for a while now,[2] for I have other matters on hand in the next *Fors* or two—Glacier theory, and on the road to it I must not let you forget the broom-market between Berne and Thun;[3] and I've got to finish my notes on Friedrich and his father, who take more noticing than I expected;[4] besides that I've Friedrich II. of Germany to give some account of;[5] and all my Oxford work besides. I can only again and again beg the many valued correspondents whose letters I must abruptly answer, to remember that not one word on any of these subjects can be set down without care; and to consider what the length of a day is, under existing solar arrangements.

Meantime, here is a point for you to think of. The boy interrupts the first scene of the play by crying aloud "An't they brothers?"[6] (the Third Fors had appointed for him that one day he should refuse to speak to his own[7]); and long remembers the astonishment with which he "looked upon the apathy of the elder part of our company, who, having the means, did not spend every evening at the theatre."[8]

How was it that he never could write a Play?[9]

[1] [See Lockhart, vol. i. p. 22.]

[2] [The story of Scott's life was not resumed, though many incidental references occur in later Letters. For some additional passages written for *Fors*, see now Appendix 8 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 541–545).]

[3] [See Letter 30 (p. 553), where the story of the Broom-Merchant was broken off.]

[4] [Nor were the notes on Frederick the Great, of Prussia, ever finished; but see Appendix to *Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. pp. 532–533.]

[5] [Promised at pp. 260, 365 *n.*, 388; but the account was never given in *Fors*, though there are many references to the Emperor in *Val d'Arno*.]

[6] [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 22.]

[7] [See Lockhart, vol. ii. pp. 254–255.]

[8] [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 86.]

[9] [The question is resumed in the next Letter, § 3 (p. 628).]

18. I HAVE mislaid, just when I wanted it, a valuable letter, which gave me the first name of Abbotsford accurately,[1]—Clarty Hole being only a corruption of it, and the real name bearing no such sense. I shall come upon it some time or other: meantime, my Scottish readers must not suppose I mean that the treatment of rivers is worse in North than in South Britain,—only they have prettier streams in Scotland to float their paraffin, or other beautiful productions of modern art, or nature, on the top of. We had one or two clear streams in Surrey, indeed; but as I was investigating the source of one of them, only the other day, I found a police office had been built over it, and that the authorities had paid five hundred pounds to construct a cesspool, with a huge iron cylinder conducting to it, through the spring. Excavating, I found the fountain running abundantly, *round* the pipe.[2]

19. The following paragraph, and the two subjoined letters,[3] appeared in the same impression of the *Daily Telegraph*, on the 12th January, 187[illegible]. I wish to preserve them in *Fors;* and I print them in this number, because the succession of the first four names in the statement of the journal associated with that of the first magistrate of the City of London, in connection with the business in hand that day, is to me the most pleasant piece of reading—and I think must be to all of us among the most significant—that has lately met our eyes in a public print; and it means such a new solemn league and covenant as Scott had been fain to see. My letter about the Italian streams may well follow what I have said of Scottish ones.

### THE FRENCH APPEAL TO ENGLAND

"We are happy to announce further contributions to the fund which is being raised in response to the appeal of the Bishop of Versailles and the clergy of the Seine-et-Oise department; and also to state that, in addition to those influential

[1] [The first name—Cartley Hole—is incidentally given in the text, above, § 5. In Crockett's *The Scott Country*, 1905, p. 254, the name is given as Cartleyhole (in the Melrose session records, as Cartlawhole and Cartlihole), christened by the neighbours as it fell into disrepair by the more characteristic name of Clarty Hole. For the passage in Lockhart, connecting the transposed name with a dirty (clarty) pond, see above, p. 595.]

[2] [No doubt the Wandel at Carshalton: see Vol. XVIII. p. 385, and Vol. XVII. p. xxiv.]

[3] [The second letter, on "Roman Inundations," is, however, not given here, as it has already been printed with others on the same subject in Vol. XVII. pp. 547 *seq.* For later references to them, see Letters 85 and 86 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 334, 345–346.]

persons whom we named yesterday as being ready to serve on a committee, two other gentlemen of high official and social position have consented to join the body. The list at present is as follows: The Lord Bishop of London; Dr. Manning, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster; the Rev. Dr. Brock, the Baptist minister; Mr. Alfred de Rothschild; and the Lord Mayor, who has courteously placed the Mansion House at the service of the committee. Besides these names, the members of the 'Paris Food Fund,' as will be seen from the subjoined letter, propose to join the more comprehensive organization.

*To the Editor of the Daily Telegraph*

"SIR,—Acting on your suggestion that the 'Paris Food Fund,' which I yesterday described to you, might be advantageously united with that which has been suggested by the Bishop of Versailles, I beg to say that Archbishop Manning, Professor Huxley, Sir John Lubbock, and Mr. Ruskin will, with myself, have great pleasure in forming part of such a public committee as you have advised, and in placing the subscriptions already sent to us at its disposal.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"JAMES T. KNOWLES."

"*Jan.* 11."

*Daily Telegraph, Jan.* 12, 1871.

# LETTER 84

## LA DOUCE DAME[1]

*"Love, it is a wrathful peace,*
*A free acquittance, without release,*
*And truth with falsehood all a-fret,*
*And fear within secureness set;*
*In heart it is despairing hope;*
*And full of hope, it is vain hope.*
*Wise madness and wild reasonne,*
*And sweet danger, wherein to drowne.*
*A heavy burden, light to bear;*
*A wicked way, away to wear.*
*It is discordance that can accord,*
*And accordance to discord;*
*It is cunning without science,*
*Wisdom without sapience,*
*Wit without discretion,*
*Having, without possession,*
*And health full of malady,*
*And charity full of envy,*
*And restraint full of abundance,*
*And a greedy suffisaunce.*
*Delight right full of heaviness,*
*And drearihood, full of gladness;*
*Bitter sweetness, and sweet error,*
*Right evil savoured good savour;*
*Sin, that pardon hath within,*
*And pardon, spotted outside with sin:*
*A pain also it is joyous,*
*And cruelty, right piteous;*
*A strength weak to stand upright,*
*And feebleness full of might;*
*Wit unadvised, sage follie,*
*And joy full of tormentry.*
*A laughter it is, weeping aye;*
*Rest, that travaileth night and day;*

[1] [See line 6 of the French verses. A rejected title for this letter was "The Two Loves."]

*Also a sweet Hell it is,*
*And a sorrowful Paradise;**
*A pleasant gaol, and an easy prison,*
*And full of froste, summer season;*
*Prime-time, full of froste's white,*
*And May devoid of all delight."*

. . . . .

*"Mesment de ceste amour*
*Li plus sages n'y sceunt tour*
*Maix ou entent je te diray*
*Une aût (outre) amour te descriray*
*De celle veuil je que pour t'ame*
*Tu aimes la tres-doulce dame.*
*Si com dist la ste escripture*
*Amours est fors, amours est dure,*
*Amours soustient, amours endure,*
*Amours revient, et tousjours dure;*
*Amours met en amer sa cure;*
*Amours loyal, amours seure*
*Sert, et de servise nacure.*
*Amours fait de propre commun,*
*Amours fait de deux cuers un;*
*Amours enchace, ce me semble,*
*Amours rent cuers, amours les emble,*
*Amours despiece, amours refait,*
*Amours fait paix, amours fait plait,*
*Amours fait bel, amours fait lait,*
*Toutes heures quant il lui plaist*
*Amours attrait, amours estrange*
*Amours fait de prive estrange;*
*Amours seurprent, amours emprent*
*Amours reprent, amours esprent,*
*Il n'est riens qu'amours ne face;*
*Amours tolt cuer, amours tolt grace,*
*Amours delie, amours enlace,*
*Amours ocist, amours efface,*
*Amours ne craint ne pic ne mace:*
*Amours fist Dieu venir en place,*
*Amours lui fist ûre (notre) char prendre,*
*Amours le fist devenir mendre,*
*Amours le fist en la croix pendre,*
*Amours le fist illec extendre,*
*Amours le fist le coste fendre,*
*Amours le fist les waulx reprendre,*
*Amours lui fist les bons aprendre,*
*Amours le fist a nous venir,*
*Amours nous fait a lui tenir."*

* See first terminal note [p. 644].

1. These descriptions of the two kinds of noble love are both given in the part of the *Romance of the Rose*[1] which was written by Jean de Meung.* Chaucer translated the first, and I have partly again translated his translation into more familiar English. I leave the original French of the other for you to work at, if ever you care to learn French;—the first is all that I want you to read just now; but they should not be separated, being among the most interesting expressions extant of the sentiment of the dark ages, which Mr. Applegarth is desirous of eliminating from modern business.

2. The two great loves,—that of husband and wife, representing generally the family affections, and that of mankind, to which, at need, the family affection must be sacrificed,—include, rightly understood, all the noble sentiments of humanity. Modern philosophy supposes these conditions of feeling to have been always absurd, and at present happily, nearly extinct; and that the only proper, or, in future, possible, motives of human action are the three wholly unsentimental desires,—the lust of the flesh (hunger, thirst, and sexual passion), the lust of the eyes (covetousness), and the pride of life (personal vanity).[2]

Thus, in a recent debate on the treatment of Canada†

* Or Méhun, near Beaugency, Loire.

† On Mr. M'Fie's motion for a committee to consider the relations that subsist between the United Kingdom and the Colonies.[4] On the varieties of filial sentiment, compare Herodotus, iii. 38; iv. 26.[5]

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[1] [Lines 4397–4434 (in Chaucer, lines 4706–4751) and 4505–4545. The whole poem, consisting of 22,000 lines, was commenced by Guillaume de Lorris, who wrote the first 4070; dying in 1260. The work was afterwards taken up and completed by Jean de Meung, who is supposed to have died about 1318.]

[2] [See Letters 28, § 22, and 33, § 1 (pp. 524, 606).]

[3] [Compare 1 John ii. 16.]

[4] [Mr. Macfie (member for Leith) moved on February 28, 1873, that "A Select Committee be appointed to consider the relations that subsist between the United Kingdom and the Colonies, particularly as they affect the direction which emigration takes, and the occupation of waste lands within the empire." Sir Charles Adderley (afterwards Lord Norton) deprecated the continuance of "a debate of this character," and urged the House "at once to draw a graceful curtain upon what was really becoming merely an annual sentimental exercitation."]

[5] [Darius asked the Greeks to eat their parents, and the Callatians to burn them: both refused with horror—so, "I think," adds Herodotus, "that Pindar

Sir C. Adderley deprecates the continuance of a debate on a question "purely sentimental." I doubt if Sir C. Adderley knew in the least what was meant by a sentimental question. It is a purely "sentimental question," for instance, whether Sir C. Adderley shall, or shall not, eat his mother, instead of burying her. Similarly, it is a purely sentimental question, whether, in the siege of Samaria, the mother who boiled her son and ate him, or the mother who hid her son, was best fulfilling her duty to society.[1] Similarly, the relations of a colony to its mother-country, in their truth and depth, are founded on purely parental and filial instincts, which may be either sentimental or bestial, but *must* be one or the other. Sir Charles probably did not know that the discussion of every such question must therefore be either sentimental *or* bestial.

Into one or other, then, of these two forms of sentiment, conjugal and family love, or compassion, all human happiness, properly so called, resolves itself; but the spurious or counter-happiness of lust, covetousness, and vanity being easily obtained, and naturally grasped at, instead, may altogether occupy the lives of men, without ever allowing them to know what happiness means.

8. But in the use I have just made of the word "compassion," I mean something very different from what is usually understood by it. Compassion is the Latin form of the Greek word "sympathy"—the English for both is "fellow-feeling"; and the condition of delight in characters higher than our own is more truly to be understood by the word "compassion" than the pain of pity for those inferior to our own; but in either case, the imaginative understanding of the natures of others, and the power of putting ourselves in their place, is the faculty on which the virtue depends. So that an unimaginative person can neither be reverent nor kind. The main use of works of

spoke rightly when he said, 'of all things usage is King.'" The Issedononians eat their fathers, and keep the skulls, gilt; "in other respects they are just folk, and their women have equal rights with the men."]

[1] [2 Kings vi. 29.]

fiction, and of the drama, is to supply, as far as possible the defect of this imagination in common minds. Bu there is a curious difference in the nature of these work themselves, dependent on the degree of imaginative pow of the writers, which I must at once explain, else I ca neither answer for you my own question put in last *For* why Scott could not write a play,[1] nor show you, whic is my present object, the real nature of sentiment.

4. Do you know, in the first place, what a play is? o what a poem is? or what a novel is? That is to say do you know the perpetual and necessary distinctions i literary aim which have brought these distinctive name into use? You had better first, for clearness' sake, call a the three "poems," for all the three are so, when the are good, whether written in verse or prose. *All truly* imaginative account of man is poetic; but there are three essential kinds of poetry,—one dramatic, one lyric, and on epic.

Dramatic poetry is the expression by the poet of othe people's feelings, his own not being told.

Lyric poetry is the expression by the poet of his own feelings.

Epic poetry is account given by the poet of othe people's external circumstances, and of events happening t them, with only such expression either of their feelings, o his own, as he thinks may be conveniently added.

The business of Dramatic poetry is therefore *with th* heart essentially; it despises external circumstance.

Lyric poetry may speak of anything that excites emotio in the speaker; while Epic poetry insists on external circum stances, and no more exhibits the heart-feeling than as i may be gathered from these.

5. For instance, the fight between the Prince of Wales and Hotspur, in *Henry the Fourth*,[2] corresponds closely, in the character of the event itself, to the fight of Fitz-James

[1] [See Letter 33, § 17 (p 621).]
[2] [Part I., Act v. sc. 4.]

with Roderick, in the *Lady of the Lake*.[1] But Shakespeare's treatment of his subject is strictly dramatic; Scott's, strictly epic.

Shakespeare gives you no account whatever of any blow or wound: his stage direction is, briefly, "Hotspur is wounded, and falls." Scott gives you accurate account of every external circumstance, and the finishing touch of botanical accuracy,—

> "Down came the blow; but in the *heath*
> The erring blade found bloodless sheath,"[2]—

makes his work perfect, as epic poetry. And Scott's work is always epic, and it is contrary to his very nature to treat any subject dramatically.

6. That is the technical distinction, then, between the three modes of work. But the gradation of power in all three depends on the degree of imagination with which the writer can enter into the feelings of other people. Whether in expressing their's or his own, and whether in expressing their feelings only, or also the circumstances surrounding them, his power depends on his being able to feel as they do; in other words, on his being able to conceive character. And the literature which is not poetry at all, which is essentially unsentimental, or anti-poetic, is that which is produced by persons who have no imagination; and whose merit (for of course I am not speaking of bad literature) is in their wit or sense, instead of their imagination.

7. The most prosaic, in this sense, piece I have ever myself examined, in the literature of any nation, is the *Henriade* of Voltaire.[3] You may take that as a work of a man whose head was as destitute of imaginative power as it is possible for the healthy cerebral organization of a highly developed mammalian animal to be. The description of the storm which carries Henry to Jersey, and of the

[1] [Canto v. stanzas xv.–xvi.]
[2] [*The Lady of the Lake*, canto v. stanza xvi.]
[3] [*Le Henriade, Poëme en Dix Chants*. Ruskin quotes from "Chant Premier."]

generally show the most wholesome balance of the sentimental and rational faculty I have ever met with in literature;—the part of Gotthelf's nature which is in sympathy with Pope and Fielding enables him to touch to just the necessary point, the lower grotesqueness of peasant nature, while his own conception of ideal virtue is as pure as Wordsworth's.

But I have only room in this *Fors* for a very little bit more of the broom-maker.[1] I continue the last sentence of it from Letter 80, § 5:—

"And then Hansli always knew that as soon as he got home there would be enough to eat;—his mother saw faithfully to that. She knew the difference it makes whether a man finds something ready to eat, when he comes in, or not. He who knows there will be something at home does not stop in the taverns; he arrives with an empty stomach, and furnishes it, highly pleased with all about him; but if he usually finds nothing ready when at home, he stops on the road, comes in when he has had enough or too much; and grumbles right and left.

"Hansli was not avaricious, but economical. For things really useful and fit, he did not look at the money. In all matters of food and clothes he wished his mother to be thoroughly at ease. He made a good bed for himself; and when he had saved enough to buy a knife or a good tool, he was quite up in the air. He himself dressed well, not expensively, but solidly. Any one with a good eye knows quickly enough, at the sight of houses or of people, whether they are going up or down. As for Hansli it was easy to see he was on his way up—not that he ever put on anything fine, but by his cleanliness and the careful look of his things: aussi, everybody liked to see him, and was very glad to know that he prospered thus not by fraud, but by work. With all that, he never forgot his prayers. On Sunday he made no brooms: in the morning he went to the sermon,* and in the afternoon he read a chapter of the Bible to his mother, whose sight was now failing. After that he gave himself a personal treat. This treat consisted in bringing out all his money, counting it, looking at it, and calculating how much it had increased, and how much it would yet increase, etc., etc. In that money there were some very pretty pieces,—above all, pretty white pieces" (silver among the copper). "Hansli was very strong in exchanges; he took small money willingly enough, but never kept it long; it seemed always to him that the wind got into it and carried it off too quickly. The new white pieces gave him an extreme

* Much the most important part of the service in Protestant Switzerland, and a less formal one than in Scotland.

† Utmost wisdom is not in self-denial, but in learning to find extreme pleasure in very little things.

[1] [The passage here given is at pp. 351–356 in the original.]

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CALIFORNIA

**Sunday Playthings**

**The Superbe Suisse and his Bear**

pleasure,—above all, the fine dollars of Berne with the bear, and the superb Swiss of old time. When he had managed to catch one of these, it made him happy for many days.*

"Nevertheless, he had also his bad days. It was always a bad day for him when he lost a customer, or had counted on placing a dozen of new brooms anywhere, and found himself briskly sent from the door with 'We've got all we want.' At first Hansli could not understand the cause of such rebuffs, not knowing that there are people who change their cook as often as their shirt—sometimes oftener,—and that he couldn't expect new cooks to know him at first sight. He asked himself then, with surprise, what he could have failed in,—whether his brooms had come undone, or whether anybody had spoken ill of him. He took that much to heart, and would plague himself all night to find out the real cause. But soon he took the thing more coolly; and even when a cook who knew him very well sent him about his business, he thought to himself, 'Bah! cooks are human creatures, like other people; and when master or mistress have been rough with them† because they've put too much pepper in the soup, or too much salt in the sauce, or when their schatz' (lover,—literally, treasure) 'is gone off to Pepperland,[1] the poor girls have well the right to quarrel with somebody else.' Nevertheless, the course of time needs brought him some worse days still, which he never got himself to take coolly. He knew now, personally, very nearly all his trees; he had indeed given, for himself alone, names to his willows, and some other particular trees, as Lizzie, Little Mary-Anne, Rosie, and so on. These trees kept him in joy all the year round, and he divided very carefully the pleasure of gathering their twigs. He treated the most beautiful with great delicacy, and carried the brooms of them to his best customers. It is true to say also that these were always master-brooms. But when he arrived thus, all joyous, at his willows, and found his Lizzie or his Rosie all cut and torn from top to bottom, his heart was so strained that the tears ran down his cheeks, and

* This pleasure is a perfectly natural and legitimate one, and all the more because it is possible only when the riches are very moderate. After getting the first shilling of which I told you,[2] I set my mind greatly upon getting a pile of new "lion shillings," as I called them[3]—the lion standing on the top of the crown; and my delight in the bloomy surface of their dead silver is quite a memorable joy to me. I have engraved, for the frontispiece,[4] the two sides of one of Hansli's Sunday playthings; it is otherwise interesting as an example of the comparatively vulgar coinage of a people uneducated in art.

† Has quarrelled with them.[5] "Les ont brusquées." I can't get the derivation beyond Johnson: "Fr. brusque; Gothic, braska." But the Italian brusco is connected with the Provençal brusca, thicket, and Fr. broussaille.

[1] [In the German, "ins Land gegangen, wo der Pfeffer wächst."]

[2] [See Letter 24, § 5, p. 419.]

[3] [This shilling was of the coinage of 1816; the arms on the reverse bore in the second quarter a lion rampant standing almost upon the crown. The same arms appeared on the coins of George IV. and William IV.]

[4] [See now Plate XIV.]

[5] [In the German, "Schnauzten."]

important phenomenon, by far, of all that offer themselves to the study of living men of science: yet in Professor Tyndall's recent work on the glaciers,* though he notices the change as one which, "if continued, will reduce the Swiss glaciers to the mere spectres of their former selves," he offers no evidence, nor even suggestion, as to the cause of the change itself.

I have no space in this number of *Fors* to say what reason there is for my taking notice of this book, or the glacier theory, in connection with the life of Scott.[1] In the interests of general literature, it is otherwise fitting that the nature of the book itself should be pointed out.

12. Its nature, that is to say, so far as it has any. It seems to be written for a singular order of young people: whom, if they were older, Professor Tyndall assures them it would give him pleasure to take up Mont Blanc; but whom he can at present invite to walk with him along the moraine from the Jardin, where "perfect steadiness of foot is necessary,—a slip would be death;" and to whom, with Mr. Hirst, he can "confide confidently" the use of his surveying chain. It is, at all events, written for entirely ignorant people—and entirely idle ones, who cannot be got to read without being coaxed and flattered into the unusual exertion. "Here, my friend," says the Professor at the end of his benevolently alluring pages, "our labours close! It has been a true pleasure to me to have you at my side so long. You have been steadfast and industrious throughout. . . . Steadfast, prudent, without terror, though not at all times without awe, I have found you, on rock and ice. Give me your hand—Goodbye." Does the

* *The Forms of Water.* King and Co., Cornhill. 1872. [Preface.]

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[1] [See above, p. 614 n.]

[2] [The book consists of notes of a course of lectures delivered to a Juvenile Audience at the Royal Institution, during the Christmas holidays, 1871. Mr. Hirst was Tyndall's assistant there. Ruskin's quotations are from §§ 136, 180, 492, 493. For similar criticisms on the style of Tyndall's book, on the *Glaciers of the Alps*, see *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. pp. 144–145.]

Professor count, then, upon *no* readers but those whom he can gratify with polite expressions of this kind? Upon none who perhaps unsteadfast, imprudent, and very much frightened upon rock and ice, have nevertheless done their own work there, and know good work of other people's, from bad, *any*where; and true praise from false anywhere; and can detect the dishonouring of nameable and noble persons, couched under sycophancy of the nameless? He has at least had one reader whom I can answer for, of this inconvenient sort.

18. It is, I am sorry to say, just forty years (some day last month) since I first saw the Bernese Alps from above Schaffhausen.[1] Since that evening I have never let slip a chance of knowing anything definite about glaciers and their ways; and have watched the progress of knowledge, and the oscillations of theory, on the subject, with an interest not less deep, and certainly more sincere, than it would have been if my own industry had been able to advance the one, or my own ingenuity to complicate the other. But only one great step in the knowledge of glaciers has been made in all that period;[2] and it seems the principal object of Professor Tyndall's book to conceal its having been taken, that he and his friends may get the credit, some day, of having taken it themselves.

I went to the University in 1836, and my best friend there, among the older masters, Dr. Buckland,[3] kept me not ill-informed on my favourite subject, the geological, or crystallogical, question. Nearly everything of which Professor Tyndall informs his courageous readers was known then, just as well as it is now. We all,—that is to say, all geologists of any standing, and their pupils,—knew that glaciers moved; that they were supplied by snow at the top of the Alps, and consumed by heat at the bottom of

[1] [In 1833; see the verses on "The Alps from Schaffhausen" in Vol. II. p. 366, and the description in *Præterita*, i. §§ 133-136.]

[2] [The following discussion should be read in connexion with the summary given in Vol. XXVI. pp. xxxiii.-xl.]

[3] [Compare *Præterita*, i. ch. xi. § 233.]

them; that there were cracks all through them, and moraine all down them; that some of their ice was clear, and other ice opaque; that some of it was sound, and some rotten and that streams fell into them at places called mills, and came out of them at places called grottoes.[1] We were, I am sorry to say, somewhat languidly content with these articles of information; we never thought of wading "breast-deep through snow" in search of more, and still less of "striking our theodolites with the feelings of a general who had won a small battle."* Things went on thus quietly enough. We were all puzzled to account for glacier motion, but never thought of ascertaining what the motion really was. We knew that the ice slipped over the rocks at some places, tumbled over them at others; gaped, or as people who wanted to write sublimely always said, yawned, when it was steep, and shut up again when it was level. And Mr. Charpentier wrote a thick volume[2] to show that it moved by expansion and contraction, which I read all through, and thought extremely plausible. But none of us ever had the slightest idea of the ice's being anything but an entirely solid substance, which was to be reasoned about as capable indeed of being broken, or crushed, or pushed, or pulled in any direction, and of sliding or falling as gravity and smooth surfaces might guide it, but was always entirely rigid and brittle in its substance like so much glass or stone.

14. This was the state of affairs in 1841. Professor Agassiz, of Neuchâtel, had then been some eight or ten years at work on the glaciers: had built a cabin on one of them; walked a great many times over a great many of them; described a number of their phenomena quite

* When next the reader has an opportunity of repeating Professor Tyndall's experiments (p. 92) in a wreath of dry snow, I recommend him first to try how much jumping is necessary in order to get into it "breast-deep"; and secondly, how far he can "wade" in that dramatic position.

[1] [See Note by Author, below, § 21.]
[2] [Jean de Charpentier, *Essai sur les Glaciers*, Lausanne, 1841.]

correctly; proposed, and in some cases performed, many ingenious experiments upon them; and indeed done almost everything that was to be done for them—except find out the one thing that we wanted to know.

As his malicious fortune would have it, he invited in that year (1841) a man of acute brains to see what he was about.[1] The invitation was accepted. The visitor was a mathematician; and after examining the question, for discussion of which Agassiz was able to supply him with all the data except those which were essential, resolved to find out the essential ones himself.

Which in the next year (1842) he quietly did; and in 1843 solved the problem of glacier motion for ever,—announcing, to everybody's astonishment, and to the extreme disgust and mortification of all glacier students,—including my poor self (not the least envious, I fancy, though with as little right to be envious as any one),—that glaciers were not solid bodies at all, but semi-liquid ones, and ran down in their beds like so much treacle.

"Cela saute aux yeux," we all said, as soon as we were told; and I well remember the intense mortification of first looking down on the dirt bands of the Mer de Glace, from the foot of the Little Charmoz, after I had read Principal Forbes' book.[2] That we never should have seen them before!—so palpable, so inevitable now, with every inch of the ice's motion kept record of, in them, for centuries, and every curve pencilled in dark, so that no river eddies, no festooned fall of sweeping cascade, could be more conclusive in proof of the flowing current. And of course it flowed; how else could it have moved but by a series of catastrophes?* Everything explained, now, by one shrewd and

* See the last terminal note [p. 647].

[1] [James D. Forbes visited M. Agassiz, who had a hut, known as the Hôtel des Neuchâtelois, on the Unteraar Glacier in August 1841. On the very first day of his visit Forbes noticed the veined, or ribbon, structure of the ice, which gave him the clue: see, again, Vol. XXVI. p. xxxv.]

[2] [See Vol. XXVI. p. xxxviii.]

clear-sighted man's work for a couple of summer months, and what asses we had all been!

15. But fancy the feelings of poor Agassiz in his Hôtel des Neuchâtelois! To have had the thing under his nose for ten years, and missed it! There is nothing in the annals of scientific mischance (perhaps the truer word would be scientific dulness) to match it; certainly it would be difficult for provocation to be more bitter,—at least, for a man who thinks, as most of our foolish modern scientific men do think, that there is no good in knowing anything for its own sake, but only in being the first to find it out.

Nor am I prepared altogether to justify Forbes in his method of proceeding, except on the terms of battle which men of science have laid down for themselves. Here is a man has been ten years at his diggings; has trenched here, and bored there, and been over all the ground again and again, except just where the nugget is. He asks one to dinner—and one has an eye for the run of a stream; one does a little bit of pickaxing in the afternoon on one's own account,—and walks off with his nugget. It is hard.

Still, in strictness, it is perfectly fair. The new-comer, spade on shoulder, does not understand, when he accepts the invitation to dinner, that he must not dig,—or must give all he gets to his host. The luck is his, and the old pitsman may very excusably growl and swear at him a little; but has no real right to quarrel with him,—still less to say that his nugget is copper, and try to make everybody else think so too.

Alas, it was too clear that this Forbes' nugget was not copper. The importance of the discovery was shown in nothing so much as in the spite of Agassiz and his friends. The really valuable work of Agassiz on the glaciers was itself disgraced, and made a monument to the genius of Forbes, by the irrelevant spite with which every page was stained in which his name could be introduced. Mr. Desor found consolation in describing the cowardice of the

Ecossais on the top of the Jungfrau;[1] and all the ingenuity and plausibility of Professor Tyndall have been employed, since the death of Forbes, to diminish the lustre of his discovery, and divide the credit of it.

16. To diminish the lustre, observe, is the fatallest wrong; by diminishing its distinctness. At the end of this last book of his, in the four hundred and tenth of the sapient sentences which he numbers with paternal care, he still denies, as far as he dares, the essential point of Forbes' discovery; denies it interrogatively, leaving the reader to consider the whole subject as yet open to discussion,—only to be conclusively determined by—Professor Tyndall and his friends. "Ice splits," he says, "if you strike a pointed pricker into it; fissures, narrow and profound, may be traced for hundreds of yards through the ice. Did the ice possess even a very small modicum of that power of stretching which is characteristic of a viscous substance, such crevasses could not be formed."[2] Professor Tyndall presumably never having seen a crack in clay, nor in shoe-leather, nor in a dish of jelly set down with a jerk; nor, in the very wax he himself squeezed flat to show the nature of cleavage,[3] —understood that the cleavage meant the multiplication of fissure!

And the book pretends to be so explanatory, too, to his young friends!—explanatory of the use of the theodolite, of the nature of presence of mind, of the dependence of enjoyment of scenery upon honest labour, of the necessity that in science, "thought, as far as possible, should be wedded to fact," and of the propriety of their becoming older and better informed before they unqualifiedly accept his opinion of the labours of Rendu![4]

But the one thing which, after following him through the edification of his four hundred and ten sentences, they

[1] [For the passage to which Ruskin here alludes, see Vol. XXVI. p. xxxvi. *n.*]
[2] [See *Forms of Water*, §§ 409, 410.]
[3] [As explained in his lecture at the Royal Institution on June 6, 1856: see *Glaciers of the Alps*, p. 435.]
[4] [See *Forms of Water*, §§ 403, 402. For the labours of Rendu, see, again, Vol. XXVI. pp. xxxiv., xxxv.]

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

18. I CUT out of the *Morning Post* of September 15th, 1873, the following piece of fashionable intelligence, as a sufficiently interesting example of the "Sorrowful Paradise"[1] which marriage, and the domestic arrangements connected with it, occasionally construct in the districts of England where Mr. Applegarth's great principle, "No sentiment ought to be brought into the subject,"[2] would be most consistently approved in all the affairs of life. The inconvenience to his master of the inopportune expression of sentiment on the part of the dog, is a striking corroboration of Mr. Applegarth's views:—

"Charles Dawson, an ironworker, who had left his wife and cohabited with a young woman named Margaret Addison, attacked her in the house with a coal rake on the head and body. He then, when his victim screamed, pressed her neck down on the floor with one of his heavy boots, while with the other he kicked her. He jumped upon her, and finally seized a large earthen pan and dashed it upon her head, killing her on the spot. The whole of the attack was witnessed by a man who was deterred from interfering by a loaded revolver which Dawson held. Dawson decamped, and strong bodies of police guarded the different roads from the town, and searched several of his haunts. At three o'clock yesterday morning a dog recognised to be Dawson's was followed, and Sergeant Cuthbert broke open the door where the animal was scratching to obtain admission, and captured Dawson, who was sitting on a chair. Although he was armed with a loaded revolver, he offered no resistance."

19. I ought to have noted in last *Fors*,[3] respecting the difficulty of spelling, some forms of bad spelling which result from the mere quantity of modern literature, and the familiarity of phrases which are now caught by the eye and ear, without being attentively looked at for an instant, so that spelling and pronunciation go to ruin together.

On the other hand, I print the following portions of a very graceful letter I received early this year, which indicates the diffusion of really sound education. I wish its writer would tell me her employment.

"LONDON, S.E.,
"*March 9th*, 1873.

"And you will not again call yourself our friend, because you are disheartened by our regardlessness of your friendship, and still more, it may be, by the discouraging voice of some on whom you might perhaps more reasonably have counted.

"You say we have never written you a word of encouragement. But don't you

[1] [See above, p. 625.]
[2] [See Letters 28, § 22, and 33, § 1 (above, pp. 524, 606).]
[3] [Letter 33, § 4 (p. 608).]

think the fault-finders would be sure to speak first, and loudest? *I* even, in my loneliness, am able to lend my copies to four, who all look forward to their turn with pleasure. (They get their pleasure *for nothing*, and I was not quite sure you would approve! until I found you would be willing to lend your Talmud!)

"On one point *I* grumble and find fault.

"Most of those works which you say you want us to read, I have read; but if I had had to pay the price at which you propose to publish them, they would have cost me £3, and I could not have afforded it; because, much as I delighted in them, I longed for certain other books as well. Many an intelligent working man with a family is poorer than I am.

"I quite thoroughly and heartily sympathise with your contempt for advertising (as it is abused at present, anyway). But I think all good books should be cheap. I would make bad ones as dear as you like.

"Was it not Socrates alone of the great Greeks who would put *no* price on his wisdom?—and Christ 'taught daily in their streets.' I do assure you there are plenty of us teachable enough, if only any one capable of teaching could get near enough, who will never, in this world, be able to afford 'a doctor's fee.'

"I wonder—if it be wrong to take interest—of what use my very small savings could be to me in old age? Would it be worth while for working women to save at all?

(Signed) "A WORKING WOMAN."

No, certainly not wrong. The wrong is in the poor wages of good work, which make it impossible to buy books at a proper price, or to save what would be enough for old age. Books should not be cheaper, but work should be dearer.

20. A young lady writing to me the other day to ask what I really wanted girls to do, I answered as follows, requesting her to copy the answer, that it might serve once for all. I print it accordingly, as perhaps a more simple statement than the one given in *Sesame and Lilies*.[1]

Women's work is,—

I. To please people.
II. To feed them in dainty ways.
III. To clothe them.
IV. To keep them orderly.
V. To teach them.

I. To please.—A woman must be a pleasant creature. Be sure that people like the room better with you in it than out of it; and take all pains to get the power of sympathy, and the habit of it.

II. Can you cook plain meats and dishes economically and savourily? If not, make it your first business to learn, as you find opportunity. When you can, advise, and personally help, any poor woman within your reach who will be glad of help in that matter; always avoiding impertinence or discourtesy of interference. Acquaint yourself with the poor, not as their patroness, but their friend: if then you can modestly recommend a little more water in the pot, or half-an-hour's more boiling, or a dainty bone they did not know of, you will have been useful indeed.

[1] [That is, in the Preface of 1871 to the "Works" Edition: see Vol. XVIII. pp. 35 *seq.*]

III. To clothe.—Set aside a quite fixed portion of your time for making strong and pretty articles of dress of the best procurable materials. You may use a sewing machine;[1] but what work is to be done (in order that it may be entirely sound) with finger and thimble, is to be your especial business.

First-rate material, however costly, sound work, and such prettiness as ingenious choice of colour and adaptation of simple form will admit, are to be your aims. Head-dress may be fantastic, if it be stout, clean, and consistently worn, as a Norman paysanne's cap. And you will be more useful in getting up, ironing, etc., a pretty cap for a poor girl who has not taste or time to do it for herself, than in making flannel petticoats or knitting stockings. But do both, and give (don't be afraid of giving;—Dorcas wasn't raised from the dead that modern clergymen might call her a fool[2]) the things you make to those who verily need them. What sort of persons these *are*, you have to find out. It is a most important part of your work.

IV. To keep them orderly,—primarily clean, tidy, regular in habits.—Begin by keeping *things* in order; soon you will be able to keep people also.

Early rising—on all grounds, is for yourself indispensable. You must be at work by latest at six in summer and seven in winter. (Of course that puts an end to evening parties, and so it is a blessed condition in two directions at once.) Every day do a little bit of housemaid's work in your own house, thoroughly, so as to be a pattern of perfection in that kind. Your actual housemaid will then follow your lead, if there's an atom of woman's spirit in her (if not, ask your mother to get another). Take a step or two of stair, and a corner of the dining-room, and keep them polished like bits of a Dutch picture.

If you have a garden, spend all spare minutes in it in actual gardening. If not, get leave to take care of part of some friend's, a poor person's, but always out of doors. Have nothing to do with greenhouses, still less with hothouses.[3]

When there are no flowers to be looked after, there are dead leaves to be gathered, snow to be swept, or matting to be nailed, and the like.

V. Teach—yourself first—to read with attention, and to remember with affection, what deserves both, and nothing else. Never read borrowed books.[4] To be without books of your own is the abyss of penury. Don't endure it. And when you've to buy them, you'll think whether they're worth reading; which you had better, on all accounts.

[1] [But see Letter 59, § 14, author's second note (Vol. XXVIII. p. 453).]

[2] [See Acts ix. 36–42. For a later reference by Ruskin to this paragraph III., in reinforcement of the necessity of not being afraid of the opinion of the world, see Letter 66, § 24 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 635).]

[3] [See, on this subject, Letter 46, § 15 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 181).]

[4] [Compare Letter 16, § 12 (p. 288).]

(*Glacier Catastrophe*, § 13)

21. With the peculiar scientific sagacity on which Professor Tyndall piques himself, he has entirely omitted to inquire what would be the result on a really brittle body,—say a sheet of glass, four miles long by two hundred feet thick (A to B, in this figure, greatly exaggerates the proportion in depth), of being pushed down over a bed of rocks of any given probable outline—say C to D. Does he suppose it would adhere to them like a tapering leech, in the line given between C and D? The third

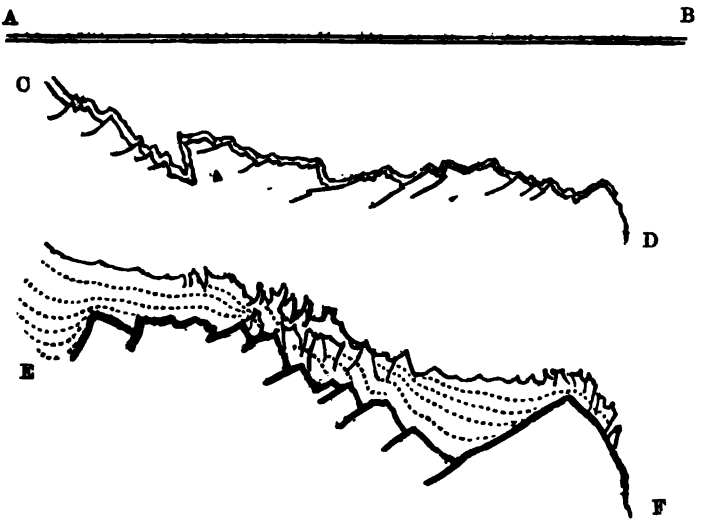


Fig. 11

sketch shows the actual condition of a portion of a glacier flowing from E to F over such a group of rocks as the lower bed of the Glacier des Bois once presented. Professor Tyndall has not even thought of explaining what course the lines of lower motion, or subsidence (in ice of the various depths roughly suggested by the dots) would follow on *any* hypothesis; for, admitting even Professor Ramsay's theory, that the glacier cut its own bed[1] (though it would be just as rational to think that its own dish was made for itself by a custard pudding), still the rocks must have had some irregularity in shape to begin with, and are not cut, even now, as smooth as a silver spoon.

[1] [On this subject, see *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. pp. lxv., lxvi.]

# LETTER 85

## SONGS OF SONGS[1]

BRANTWOOD, 18*th September*, 1873.

1. LOOKING up from my paper, as I consider what I am to say in this letter, and in what order to say it, I see out of my window, on the other side of the lake, the ivied chimneys (thick and strong-built, like castle towers, and not at all disposed to drop themselves over people below) of the farmhouse,[2] where, I told you the other day,[3] I saw its mistress preparing the feast of berry-bread for her sheep-shearers. In that farmhouse, about two hundred and fifty years ago, warmed himself at the hearth, ten feet across, of its hall, the English squire[4] who wrote the version of the Psalms from which I chose for you the fourteenth and fifteenth, last November.[5] Of the said squire I wish you, this November, to know somewhat more; here, to begin, is his general character, given by a biographer who may be trusted:[6]—

"He was a true model of worth; a man fit for conquest, plantation, reformation, or what action soever is greatest and hardest among men; withal such a lover of mankind, and goodness, that whosoever had any real parts, in him found comfort, participation, and protection to the uttermost of his power. The universities abroad and at home accounted him a general Mæcenas of learning, dedicated their books to him, and communicated every invention or improvement of knowledge to him. Soldiers honoured him, and were so honoured by him, as no man thought he marched under the true banner of Mars, that had not obtained Sir Philip

[1] [For the title, see § 7, where Ruskin refers to the Canticles, or Song of Songs, as one of the Songs of Songs with which the Letter deals.]

[2] [Coniston Hall; for woodcut of it, see *The Poetry of Architecture*, Vol. I. p. 60.]

[3] [See Letter 32, § 12 (p. 592).]

[4] [Sir Philip Sidney (see Preface to *Rock Honeycomb*).]

[5] [Letter 23, § 24 (p. 415).]

[6] [Ruskin quotes, with some compression, from p. 60 of the Life of Sidney in the following book: *The Miscellaneous Works of Sir Philip Sidney, Knt. With a Life of the Author and Illustrative Notes by William Gray:* Oxford, 1829. The original authority there cited by Gray is Sidney's friend, Fulke Greville, Lord Brook: see vol. i. pp. 25, 26 of *Lord Brook's Life of Sir Philip Sydney* (1816 edition).]

idney's approbation. Men of affairs, in most parts of Christendom, entertained correspondency with him. But what speak I of these? His heart nd capacity were so large, that there was not a cunning painter, a skilful ngineer, an excellent musician, or any other artificer of extraordinary ame, that made not himself known to this famous spirit, and found him his rue friend without hire, and the common rendezvous of worth in his time."

2. This being (and as I can assure you, by true report) his character, and manner of life, you are to observe these things, farther, about his birth, fate, and death.

When he was born, his mother was in mourning for her father, brother, and sister-in-law, who all had died on the scaffold.[1] Yet, very strangely, you will find that he takes no measures, in his political life, for the abolition of capital punishment.

Perhaps I had better at once explain to you the meaning of his inactivity in that cause, although for my own part I like best to put questions only, and leave you to work them out for yourselves as you are able. But you could not easily answer this one without help. This psalm-singing squire has nothing to urge against capital punishment, because his grandfather, uncle, and aunt-in-law all died innocent. It is only rogues who have a violent objection to being hanged, and only abettors of rogues who would desire anything else for them. Honest men don't in the least mind being hanged occasionally by mistake, so only that the general principle of the gallows be justly maintained; and they have the pleasure of knowing that the world they leave is positively minded to cleanse itself of the human vermin with which they have been classed by mistake.[2]

3. The contrary movement—so vigorously progressive in modern days—has its real root in a gradually increasing conviction on the part of the English nation that they are *all* vermin. ("Worms" is the orthodox Evangelical expression. Which indeed is becoming a fact, very fast indeed;—but was by no means so in the time of this psalm-singing squire. In his days, there was still a quite sharp separation

[1] [See below, § 9.]

[2] [For other passages in which Ruskin states his views on Capital Punishment, see below, p. 667 *n.*]

Now, blessed you, bear onward blessed me,
To her, where I my heart, safe left, shall meet;
My Muse and I must you of duty greet
With thanks and wishes; wishing thankfully—
'Be you still fair, honour'd by public heed;
By no encroachment wrong'd, nor time forgot;
Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed;
And that you know, I envy you no lot
Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss,—
Hundreds of years you Stella's feet may kiss.'"[1]

Hundreds of years! You think that a mistake? No, it is the very rapture of love. A lover like this does not believe his mistress can grow old, or die. How do you think the other verses read, apropos of railway signals and railway scrip?

"Be you still fair, honour'd by public heed,*
Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed."

5. But to keep our eyes and ears with our squire. Presently he comes in sight of his mistress's house, and then sings this sonnet:—

"I see the house; my heart, thyself contain![2]
Beware full sails drown not thy tott'ring barge;
Lest joy, by nature apt spirits to enlarge,
Thee, to thy wreck, beyond thy limits strain.
Nor do like lords, whose weak, confused brain,
Not pointing to fit folks each undercharge,
While ev'ry office themselves will discharge,
With doing all, leave nothing done but pain.
But give apt servants their due place; let eyes
See beauty's total sum, summ'd in her face;
Let ears hear speech, which wit to wonder ties;
Let breath suck up those sweets; let arms embrace
The globe of weal; lips, Love's indentures make;
Thou, but of all the kingly tribute take!"[3]

6. And here is one more, written after a quarrel, which is the prettiest of all as a song; and interesting for you to

* See terminal notes, § 16 [p. 664].

[1] [*Astrophel and Stella*, 84th sonnet.]
[2] [Ruskin in his copy notes against these words, "Continence, Measure, Moderation of infinite love."]
[3] [*Astrophel and Stella*, 85th sonnet.]

compare with the Baron of Bradwardine's song at Lucky M'Leary's:[1]—

"All my sense thy sweetness gained,
Thy fair hair my heart enchained;
My poor reason thy words moved,[2]
So that thee, like heav'n, I loved.

Fa, la, la, leridan, dan, dan, dan, deridan;
Dan, dan, dan, deridan, dei;
While to my mind the outside stood,
For messenger of inward good.

Now thy sweetness sour is deemed;
Thy hair not worth a hair esteemed,
Reason hath thy words removed,
Finding that but words they proved.

Fa, la, la, leridan, dan, dan, dan, deridan;
Dan, dan, dan, deridan, dei;
For no fair sign can credit win,
If that the substance fail within.

No more in thy sweetness glory,
For thy knitting hair be sorry;
Use thy words but to bewail thee,
That no more thy beams avail thee
Dan, dan,
Dan, dan,
Lay not thy colours more to view
Without the picture be found true.

Woe to me, alas! she weepeth!
Fool! in me what folly creepeth?
Was I to blaspheme enraged
Where my soul I have engaged?
And wretched I must yield to this?
The fault I blame, her chasteness is.

Sweetness! sweetly pardon folly;
Tie me, hair, your captive wholly;
Words! O words of heav'nly knowledge!
Know, my words their faults acknowledge
And all my life I will confess,
The less I love, I live the less."[3]

[1] [*Waverley*, ch. xi.]
[2] [Here in his copy Ruskin notes, "The triplicity—Sense (sweetness), Heart (hair), Reason (words)," the three points being taken up in each verse (but one) of the poem.]
[3] [One of Certaine Sonnets appended to *Arcadia*.]

being the first to perceive, was able nevertheless to amuse his sick-bed by composing an ode on the nature of his wound, which he caused to be sung to solemn music, as an entertainment that might soothe and divert his mind from his torments; and on the 16th October breathed his last breath in the arms of his faithful secretary and bosom companion, Mr. William Temple, after giving this charge to his own brother: 'Love my memory; cherish my friends. Their faith to me may assure you they are honest. But above all govern your will and affections by the will and word of your Creator,* in me beholding the end of this world, with all its vanities.'"

9. Thus died, for England, and a point of personal honour, in the thirty-second year of his age, Sir Philip Sidney, whose name perhaps you have heard before, as well as that of his aunt-in-law, Lady Jane Grey, for whose capital punishment, as well as that of the Duke of Northumberland (his grandfather), his mother, as above stated, was in mourning when he was born.

And Spenser broke off his *Faëry Queen*, for grief, when he died;[1] and all England went into mourning for him: which meant, at that time, that England was really sorry, and not that an order had been received from Court.

10. 16*th October* (St. Michael's).—I haven't got my goose-pie made, after all;[2] for my cook has been ill, and, unluckily, I've had other things as much requiring the

* He meant the Bible; having learned Evangelical views at the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

[1] [Here, again, Ruskin quotes from W. Gray's *Life of Sidney* (as cited above, p. 648 *n.*), according to whom (p. 57 *n.*) there is some foundation "for the assertion that the death of Sidney prevented the completion of the Fairy Queen, by depriving its author both of the means and the spirit to complete his design. It has been pretty generally admitted that he intended to represent our hero under the character of Prince Arthur." Sidney had in 1572 "witnessed, and nearly suffered in, the most savage act of religious bigotry, the fiendlike massacre of St. Bartholomew" (Gray, p. 7).]

[2] [See Letter 25, § 2 (p. 448).]

patronage of St. Michael, to think of. You suppose, perhaps (the English generally seem to have done so since the blessed Reformation), that it is impious and Popish to think of St. Michael with reference to any more serious affair than the roasting of goose, or baking thereof; and yet I have had some amazed queries from my correspondents, touching the importance I seem to attach to my pie;[1] and from others, questioning the economy of its construction. I don't suppose a more savoury, preservable, or nourishing dish could be made, with Michael's help, to drive the devil of hunger out of poor men's stomachs,[2] on the occasions when Christians make a feast, and call to it the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind. But, putting the point of economy aside for the moment, I must now take leave to reply to my said correspondents, that the importance and reality of goose-pie, in the English imagination, as compared with the unimportance and unreality of the archangel Michael, his name, and his hierarchy, are quite as serious subjects of regret to me as to them; and that I believe them to be mainly traceable to the loss of the ideas, both of any "arche," beginning, or princedom of things, and of any holy or hieratic end of things; so that, except in eggs of vermin, embryos of apes, and other idols of genesis enthroned in Mr. Darwin's and Mr. Huxley's shrines, or in such extinction as may be proper for lice, or double-ends as may be discoverable in amphisbænas, there is henceforward, for man, neither alpha nor omega,—neither beginning nor end,[3] neither nativity nor judgment; no Christmas Day, except for pudding; no Michaelmas, except for goose; no Dies Iræ, or day of final capital punishment, for anything; and that, therefore, in the classical words of Ocellus Lucanus, quoted by Mr. Ephraim Jenkinson, "Anarchon kai atelutaion to pan."[4]

11. There remains, however, among us, very strangely, some instinct of general difference between the abstractedly

[1] [See above, p. 447.]
[2] [Compare Letter 62, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 514).]
[3] [See Revelation i. 8.]
[4] [*Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. xxv.]

angelic, hieratic, or at least lord- and lady-like character —and the diabolic, non-hieratic, or slave- and (reverse-of-lady-) like character. Instinct, which induces the *London Journal*, and other such popular works of fiction, always to make their heroine, whether saint or poisoner, a "Lady" something; and which probably affects your minds not a little in connection with the question of capital punishment; so that when I told you just now who Sir Philip's aunt was, perhaps you felt as if I had cheated you by the words of my first reference to her, and would say to yourselves, "Well, but Lady Jane Grey wasn't hanged!"

No; she was not hanged; nor crucified, which was the most vulgar of capital punishments in Christ's time; nor kicked to death, which you at present consider the proper form of capital punishment for your wives;[1] nor abused to death, which the mob will consider the proper form of capital punishment for your daughters,* when Mr. John Stuart Mill's Essay on Liberty shall have become the Gospel of England, and his statue be duly adored.

She was only decapitated, in the picturesque manner represented to you by Mr. Paul de la Roche in that charming work of modern French art[2] which properly companions the series of Mr. Gérome's deaths of duellists and gladiators, and Mr. Gustave Doré's pictures of lovers halved, or quartered, with their hearts jumping into their mistresses' laps. Of all which pictures, the medical officer of the Bengalee-Life-Insurance Society would justly declare that "even in an anatomical point of view, they were—per-fection."[3]

* For the present, the daughters seem to take the initiative. See story from Halifax in the last terminal note [p. 667].

[1] [See above, p. 644; and compare Letter 42, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 100).]

[2] [A photographic reproduction of Paul Delaroche's "Death of Lady Jane Grey" may be seen at p. 52 of *Historical Illustrations*, by Paul Delaroche, 1873. For another reference, in a similar sense, to the works of Gérome and Doré, see Vol. XXII. p. 472. In a *Descriptive Catalogue of Pictures by M. Gustave Doré*, exhibited at the Doré Gallery in Bond Street, 1872, p. 18, a laudatory "press opinion" on the picture of "Paolo and Francesca" is quoted:—

"The deadly blue of the wound has an anatomical truth that is startling. Let M. Doré paint thus and his fame will take care of itself."]

[3] [*Martin Chuzzlewit*, ch. xxvii.]

She was only decapitated, by a man in a black mask, on a butcher's block; and her head rolled into sawdust, —if that's any satisfaction to you. But why on earth do you care more about her than anybody else, in these days of liberty and equality?

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12. I shall have something soon to tell you of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, no less than Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*.[1] The following letter, though only a girl's, contains so much respecting the Arcadia of Modern England which I cannot elsewhere find expressed in so true and direct a way, that I print it without asking her permission, promising however, hereby, not to do so naughty a thing again, —to her, at least; new correspondents must risk it.

"I wish people would be good, and do as you wish, and help you. Reading *Fors* last night made me determined to try very hard to be good. I *cannot* do all the things you said in the last letter you wanted us to do, but I will try.

"Oh dear! I wish you would emigrate, though I know you won't. I wish we could all go somewhere fresh, and begin anew: it would be so much easier. In fact it seems impossible to alter things here. You cannot think how it is, in a place like this. The idea of there being any higher law to rule all one's actions than self-interest, is treated as utter folly; really, people do not hesitate to say that in business each one must do the best he can for himself, at any risk or loss to others. You do know all this, perhaps, by hearsay, but it is so sad to see in practice. They all grow alike—by constant contact I suppose; and one has to hear one after the other gradually learning and repeating the lesson they learn in town—to trust no one, believe in no one, admire no one; to act as if all the world was made of rogues and thieves, as the only way to be safe, and not to be a rogue or thief oneself if it's possible to make money without. And what can one do? They laugh at me. Being a woman, of course I know nothing; being, moreover, fond of reading, I imagine I do know something, and so get filled with foolish notions, which it is their duty to disabuse me of as soon as possible. I should so like to drag them all away from this wretched town, to some empty, new, beautiful, large country, and set them all to dig, and plant, and build; and we could, I am sure, all be pure and honest once more. No, there is no chance here. I am so sick of it all.

"I want to tell you one little fact that I heard the other day that mad

[1] [This, however, was not done, though incidental references to More's *Utopia* will be found in Vol. XXVIII. pp. 23, 47. There are many references to Sidney's paraphrase of the Psalms (*e.g.*, ibid., pp. 327, 373, 615), but none to the *Arcadia*.]

OXFORD, 24th October

18. The Third Fors has just put into my hands, as I arrange my books here, a paper read before a Philosophical Society in the year 1870 (in mercy to the author, I forbear to give his name;[1] and in respect to the Philosophical Society, I forbear to give *its* name), which alleges as a discovery, by "interesting experiment," that a horizontal plank of ice laid between two points of support, bends between them; and seriously discusses the share which the "motive power of heat" has in that amazing result. I am glad, indeed, to see that the author "cannot, without some qualifications, agree" in the lucid opinion of Canon Moseley,[2] that since, in the Canon's experiments, *ice* was crushed under a pressure of 808 lb. on the square inch, a glacier over 710 feet thick would crush itself to *pieces* at the bottom. (The Canon may still further assist modern science by determining what weight is necessary to crush an inch cube of water; and favouring us with his resulting opinion upon the probable depth of the sea.) But I refer to this essay only to quote the following passages *in it*, to prove, for future reference, the degree of ignorance to which the ingenuity of Professor Tyndall had reduced *the general* scientific public, in the year 1870:—

"*The generally accepted theory proved by the Rev. Canon Moseley to be incorrect.*—Since the time that Professor Tyndall had shown that *all the* phenomena formerly attributed by Professor Forbes to plasticity could be explained upon the principle of regelation, discovered by Faraday, *the* viscous theory of glacier-motion has been pretty generally given up. The ice of a glacier is now almost universally believed to be, not a soft plastic substance, but a substance hard, brittle, and unyielding. The *power that* the glacier has of accommodating itself to the inequalities of its bed

[1] [The reference is to a paper, "On the Cause of the Motion of Glaciers," by James Croll, of the Geological Survey of Scotland. The paper was not read before a Philosophical Society, but communicated to the *London, Edinburgh, and Dublin Philosophical Magazine and Journal of Science*, September 1870, 4th Series, vol. 40. Ruskin quotes from pp. 153, 167.]

[2] [See "On the Mechanical Properties of Ice," by Henry Moseley, F.R.S., Canon of Bristol, vol. 39 (4th Series), January 1870, p. 6 of the same Magazine. Moseley was answered by J. Ball, F.R.S. (President of the Alpine Club), in *the same* Magazine, July 1870, 4th Series, vol. 40, pp. 1 *seq.*]

without losing its apparent continuity is referred to the property of regelation possessed by ice. All this is now plain."

"*The present state of the question.*—The condition which the perplexing question of the cause of the descent of glaciers has now reached seems to be something like the following. The ice of a glacier is not in a soft and plastic state, but is solid, hard, brittle, and unyielding."

14. I hope to give a supplementary number of *Fors*, this winter, on glacier questions;[1] and will only, therefore, beg my readers at present to observe that the opponents of Forbes are simply in the position of persons who deny the flexibility of chain-mail because "steel is not flexible"; and, resolving that steel is not flexible, account for the bending of an old carving-knife by the theory of "contraction and expansion."

Observe, also, that "regelation" is only scientific language for "freezing again"; and it is supposed to be more explanatory, as being Latin.[2]

Similarly, if you ask any of these scientific gentlemen the reason of the forms of hoar-frost on your window-pane, they will tell you they may be all explained by the "theory of congelation."

15. Finally; here is the first part of the question, in brief terms for you to think over.

A cubic foot of snow falls on the top of the Alps. It takes, more or less, forty years (if it doesn't melt) to get to the bottom of them. During that period it has been warmed by forty summers, frozen by forty winters; sunned and shaded,—sopped and dried,—dropped and picked up again,—wasted and supplied,—cracked and mended,—squeezed together and pulled asunder, by every possible variety of temperature and force that wind, weather, and colossal forces of fall and weight, can bring to bear upon it.

How much of it will get to the bottom? With what additions or substitutions of matter, and in what consistence?

[1] [See Letter 43, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 123).]

[2] [For other cases of such "explanation," criticised by Ruskin, see Vol. XXVI. p. 317 *n.*; and compare, above, pp. 65, 508.]

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

16. I FIND an excellent illustration of the state of modern roads, "not blamed for blood,"[1] in the following "Month's List of Killed and Wounded," from the *Pall Mall Gazette*:[2]—

"We have before us a task at once monotonous, painful, and revolting. It is to record, for the benefit of the public, the monthly list of slaughter by rail for the last four weeks unprecedented in degree and variety. In August there were three 'accidents,' so called, for every five days. In the thirty days of September there have been in all thirty-six. We need not explain the dreary monotony of this work. Every newspaper reader understands that for himself. It is also painful, because we are all more or less concerned, either as travellers, shareholders, or workers on railways; and it is grievous to behold enormous sums of money thrown away at random in compensation for loss of life and limb, in making good the damage done to plant and stock, in costly law litigation, and all for the sake of what is called economy. It is, moreover, a just source of indignation to the tax-payer to reflect that he is compelled to contribute to maintain a costly staff of Government inspectors (let alone the salaries of the Board of Trade), and that for any practical result of the investigations and reports of these gentlemen, their scientific knowledge and 'urgent recommendations,' they might as well be men living in the moon. It is revolting because it discloses a miserable greed, and an entire callousness of conscience on the part of railway directors, railway companies, and the railway interest alike, and in the Government and Legislature a most unworthy and unwise cowardice. It is true that the situation may be accounted for by the circumstance that there are between one and two hundred railway directors in the House of Commons who uniformly band together, but that explanation does not improve the fact.

Sept. 2.—North-Eastern Railway, near Hartlepool. Passenger train got off the line; three men killed, several injured. Cause, a defective wheel packed with sheet iron. The driver had been recently fined for driving too slowly.

Sept. 5.—Great Western. A goods train ran into a number of beasts, and then came into collision with another goods train.

Sept. 6.—Line from Helensburgh to Glasgow. A third-class carriage got on fire. No communication between passengers and guard. The former got through the windows as best they could, and were found lying about the line, six of them badly injured.

Sept. 8.—A train appeared quite unexpectedly on the line between Tamworth and Rugby. One woman run over and killed.

Sept. 9.—Cannon Street. Two carriages jumped off the line; traffic much delayed.

Sept. 9.—Near Guildford. A bullock leaped over a low gate on to the line; seven carriages were turned over the embankment and shivered to splinters; three passengers were killed on the spot, suffocated or jammed to death; about fifteen were injured.

Sept. 10.—London and North-Western, at Watford. Passenger train left the rails where the points are placed, and one carriage was overturned; several persons injured, and many severely shaken.

[1] [Sir Philip Sidney: see above, § 4.]

[2] [October 4, 1873. There is a similar list of "Railway Disasters for October" in the issue of November 4. For Ruskin's views on railroad management, see his letters contributed during 1865–1870 to the *Daily Telegraph* (Vol. XVII. pp. 528 *seq.*).]

Sept. 10.—Great Northern, at Ardsley. Some empty carriages were put unsecured on an incline, and ran into the Scotch express; three carriages smashed, several passengers injured, and driver, stoker, and guard badly shaken.

Sept. 11.—Great Eastern, near Sawbridgeworth. A goods train, to which was attached a waggon inscribed as defective and marked for repair, was proceeding on the up line; the waggon broke down, and caught a heavy passenger train on the down line: one side of this train was battered to pieces; many passengers severely shaken and cut with broken glass.

Sept. 12.—East Lancashire, near Bury. A collision between two goods trains. Both lines blocked and waggons smashed. One driver was very badly hurt.

Sept. 13.—London, Chatham, and Dover, near Birchington station. Passenger train drove over a number of oxen; engine was thrown off the line; driver terribly bruised; passengers severely shaken. Cause, the animals got loose while being driven over a level-crossing, and no danger signals were hoisted.

Sept. 15.—Caledonian line, near Glasgow. Passenger train ran into a mineral train which had been left planted on the line; one woman not expected to survive, thirteen passengers severely injured. Cause, gross negligence.

Same day, and same line.—Caledonian goods train was run into broadside by a North British train; great damage done; the guard was seriously injured. Cause, defective signalling.

Sept. 16.—Near Birmingham. A passenger train, while passing over some points, got partly off the line; no one severely hurt, but all shaken and frightened. Cause, defective working of points.

Sept. 17.—Between Preston and Liverpool, near Houghton. The express train from Blackburn ran into a luggage train which was in course of being shunted, it being perfectly well known that the express was overdue. About twenty passengers were hurt, or severely shaken and alarmed, but no one was actually killed. Cause, gross negligence, want of punctuality, and too much traffic.

Same day.—Great Eastern. Points not being closed, a cattle train left the metal and ploughed up the line, causing much damage and delay in traffic. Cause, negligence.

Same day.—Oxford and Bletchley Railway. Axle-wheel of waggon broke, and with seven trucks left the line. A general smash ensued; broken carriages were strewed all over the line, and a telegraph post was knocked down: blockage for four hours. Cause, defective axle.

Same day.—A goods train from Bolton to Manchester started so laden as to project over the other line for the down traffic. Encountering the express from Manchester near Stone Clough, every passenger carriage was in succession struck and injured. Cause, gross negligence of porters, station-master, and guard of goods train.

"Here, it will be observed, we have already got eighteen catastrophes within seventeen days. On September 18 and 19 there was a lull, followed by an appalling outbreak.

Sept. 20.—At the Bristol terminus, where the points of the Midland and Great Western meet, a mail train of the former ran full into a passenger train belonging to the latter. As they were not at full speed, no one was killed, but much damage was done. Cause, want of punctuality and gross negligence. Under a system where the trains of two large companies have a junction in common and habitually cross each other many times a day, the block system seems impossible in practice.

Same day.—Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincoln line. A passenger train was unhooked from the engine at Penistone, and ran down the incline at a fearful rate. A signalman, seeing something wrong, and naturally confused, turned it on to the Sheffield line. At Wortley it encountered a goods train laden with pig-iron. Smash in every direction, carriages and trucks mounting one on the top of the other. Fortunately there were only three passengers; but all were seriously injured. Cause, gross negligence.

Sept. 22.—Midland Railway, near Kettering. A train ran off the line; metals torn up; traffic delayed for two hours.

Same day.—Passenger train from Chester was descending the tunnel under Birkenhead; the engine ran off the line and dashed against the tunnel wall. Passengers much shaken, but not seriously maimed. Traffic stopped for several hours.

Sept. 23.—A lull.

Sept. 24.—North British Railway, at Reston Junction. The early express train which leaves Berwick for Edinburgh at 4.30 a.m. was going at full speed, all signals being at safety, but struck a waggon which was left standing a little on the main line over a siding; engine damaged, and the panels and foot-boards of ten carriages knocked to bits; no loss of life. Cause, gross negligence.

Sept. 25.—A Midland excursion train from Leicester got off the line near New Street station; the van was thrown across both lines of rails; great damage and delay. Cause, over-used metal.

## LETTER 36

### TRAVELLER'S REST[1]

1. THREE years have passed since I began these letters. Of the first, and another, I forget which, a few more than a thousand have been sold;[2] and as the result of my begging for money, I have got upwards of two hundred pounds. The number of the simple persons who have thus trusted me is stated at the end of this letter. Had I been a swindler, the British public would delightedly have given me two hundred thousand pounds instead of two hundred;[3] of which I might have returned them, by this time, say, the quarter, in dividends; spent a hundred and fifty thousand pleasantly, myself, at the rate of fifty thousand a year; and announced, in this month's report, with regret, the failure of my project, owing to the unprecedented state of commercial affairs induced by strikes, unions, and other illegitimate combinations among the workmen.

And the most curious part of the business is that I fancy I should have been a much more happy and agreeable member of society, spending my fifty thousand a year thus, in the way of business, than I have been in giving away my own seven thousand, and painfully adding to it this collection of two hundred, for a piece of work which is to give me a great deal of trouble, and be profitable only to other people.

Happy, or sulky, however, I have got this thing to do; and am only amused, instead of discouraged, by the beautiful reluctance of the present English public to trust an honest person, without being flattered, or promote a useful work, without being bribed.

[1] [For the title, see § 5.]

[2] [The Bibliographical Note shows that at this time only the first and second Letters had gone into a second edition.]

[3] [See below, p. 678.]

2. It may be true that I have not brought my plan rightly before the public yet. "A bad thing will pay, if you put it properly before the public," wrote a first-rate man of business the other day, to one of my friends. But what the final results of putting bad things properly before the public will be to the exhibitor of them, and the public also, no man of business that I am acquainted with is yet aware.

I mean, therefore, to persist in my own method; and to allow the public to take their time. One of their most curiously mistaken notions is that they can hurry the pace of Time itself, or avert its power. As to these letters of mine, for instance, which all my friends beg me not to write, because no workman will understand them now;[1]—what would have been the use of writing letters only for the men who have been produced by the instructions of Mr. John Stuart Mill? I write to the labourers of England; but not of England in 1870–73. A day will come when we shall have men resolute to do good work, and capable of reading and thinking while they rest; who will not expect to build like Athenians without knowing anything about the first king of Athens, nor like Christians without knowing anything about Christ: and then they will find my letters useful, and read them. And to the few readers whom these letters now find, they will become more useful as they go on, for they are a mosaic-work into which I can put a piece here and there as I find glass of the colour I want; what is as yet done being set, indeed, in patches, but not without design.

3. One chasm I must try to fill to-day, by telling you why it is so grave a heresy (or wilful source of division) to call any book, or collection of books, the "Word of God."[2]

By that Word, or Voice, or Breath, or Spirit, the heavens and earth, and all the host of them, were made;[3] and in it they exist. It is your life; and speaks to you always, so long as you live nobly;—dies out of you as you refuse to

[1] [Compare, above, p. 181.]
[2] [See Letter 35, § 3 (p. 650).]
[3] [Genesis ii. 1; John i. 1.]

obey it; leaves you to hear, and be slain by, the word of an evil spirit, instead of it.

It may come to you in books,—come to you in clouds —come to you in the voices of men,—come to you in the stillness of deserts. You must be strong in evil, if you have quenched it wholly;—very desolate in this Christian land, if you have never heard it at all. Too certainly, in this Christian land you do hear, and loudly, the contrary of it,—the doctrine or word of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy; forbidding to marry, recommending women to find some more lucrative occupation than that of nursing the baby;[1] and commanding to abstain from meats (and drinks) which God has appointed to be received with thanksgiving. For "everything which God has made is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be sanctified by the Word of God." And by what else?

4. If you have been accustomed to hear the clergyman's letter[2] from which I have just been quoting, as if it were *itself* the Word of God,—you have been accustomed also to hear our bad translation of it go on saying, "If it be sanctified by the Word of God, and *prayer*." But there is nothing whatever about prayer in the clergyman's letter. —nor does he say, *If* it be sanctified. He says, "For it *is* sanctified by the Word of God, and the chance that brings it."* Which means, that when meat comes in your way when you are hungry, or drink when you are thirsty, and you know in your own conscience that it is good for you to have it, the meat and drink are holy[3] to you.

5. But if the Word of God in your heart[4] is against it,

* The complete idea I believe to be "the Divine Fors," or Providence, accurately so called, of God. "For it is sanctified by the Word of God, and the granting."

[1] [See Letter 24, § 20 (p. 431).]

[2] [See St. Paul's first Epistle to Timothy, iv. 1–5. Here, however, Ruskin's memory of the Bible fails him, the English version being that which Ruskin says it should be, namely, "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." The Greek word here translated "prayer" is ἔντευξις, which has primarily the meaning here taken by Ruskin, though it occurs also in classical Greek in the sense of a petition.]

[3] [That is, in one sense, helpful: see Vol. VII. p. 206.]

[4] [Romans x. 8.]

and you know that you would be better without the extra glass of beer you propose to take, and that your wife would be the better for the price of it, then it is unholy to you: and you can only have the sense of entire comfort and satisfaction, either in having it, or going without it, if you are simply obeying the Word of God about it in your mind, and accepting contentedly the chances for or against it; as probably you have heard of Sir Philip Sidney's accepting the chance of another soldier's needing his cup of water more than he, on his last battle-field, and instantly obeying the Word of God coming to him on that occasion.[1] Not that it is intended that the supply of these good creatures of God[2] should be left wholly to chance; but that if we observe the proper laws of God concerning them, and, for instance, instead of forbidding marriage, duly and deeply reverence it, then, in proper time and place, there will be true Fors, or chancing on, or finding of, the youth and maid by each other, such in character as the Providence of Heaven appoints for each: and, similarly, if we duly recognize the laws of God about meats and drinks, there will for every labourer and traveller be such chancing upon meat and drink and other entertainment as shall be sacredly pleasant to him. And there cannot indeed be at present imagined a more sacred function for young Christian men than that of hosts or hospitallers, supplying, to due needs, and with proper maintenance of their own lives, wholesome food and drink to all men: so that as, at least, always at one end of a village there may be a holy church and vicar, so at the other end of the village there may be a holy tavern and tapster,[3] ministering the good creatures of

[1] ["Being thirsty with excess of bleeding, he called for drink, which was presently brought him; but as he was putting the bottle to his mouth, he saw a poor soldier carried along, who had eaten his last at the same feast, ghastly casting up his eyes at the bottle; which Sir Philip perceiving, took it from his head before he drank, and delivered it to the poor man, with these words: 'Thy necessity is yet greater than mine'" (*Lord Brook's Life of Sir Philip Sidney*, 1816 edition, vol. ii. p. 32).]

[2] ["These thy creatures of bread and wine"—Consecration Prayer in the Communion Service.]

[3] [Compare Letters 70 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 729, note *c*), 83, 84, 90, and 93 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 272, 295, 434, 474). The idea in these passages closely resembles that of Plato in the *Laws*, xi. 918.]

God, so that they may be sanctified by the Word of God and His Providence.

6. And as the providence of marriage, and the giving to each man the help-meet for his life, is now among us destroyed by the wantonness of harlotry, so the providence of the Father who would fill men's hearts with food and gladness[1] is destroyed among us by prostitution of joyless drink; and the never to be enough damned guilt of men, and governments, gathering pence at the corners of the streets, standing there, pot in hand, crying, "Turn in hither;[2] come, eat of my evil bread, and drink of my beer, which I have venomously mingled."

7. Against which temptations—though never against the tempters—one sometimes hears one's foolish clergy timorously inveighing; and telling young idlers that it is wrong to be lustful, and old labourers that it is wrong to be thirsty: but I never heard a clergyman yet (and during thirty years of the prime of my life I heard one sermon at least every Sunday, so that it is after experience of no fewer than one thousand five hundred sermons, most of them by scholars, and many of them by earnest men), that I now solemnly state I never heard *one* preacher deal faithfully with the quarrel between God and Mammon, or explain the need of choice between the service of those two masters. And all vices are indeed summed, and all their forces consummated, in that simple acceptance of the authority of gold instead of the authority of God; and preference of gain, or the increase of gold, to godliness, or the peace of God.[3]

8. I take then, as I promised,[4] the fourteenth and fifteenth Psalms for examination with respect to this point.

The second verse of the fourteenth declares that of the children of men, there are none that seek God.

[1] [Acts xiv. 17.]
[2] [Compare Proverbs ix. 4, 5.]
[3] [Compare 1 Timothy vi. 5.]
[4] [See Letter 35, § 3 (p. 650).]

The fifth verse of the same Psalm declares that God is in the generation of the righteous. *In* them, observe; not needing to be sought by them.

From which statements, evangelical persons conclude that there are no righteous persons at all.

Again, the fourth verse of the Psalm declares that all the workers of iniquity eat up God's people as they eat bread.

Which appears to me a very serious state of things, and to be put an end to, if possible; but evangelical persons conclude thereupon that the workers of iniquity and the Lord's people are one and the same. Nor have I ever heard in the course of my life any single evangelical clergyman so much as put the practical inquiry, Who is eating, and who is being eaten?[1]

Again, the first verse of the Psalm declares that the fool hath said in his heart there is no God; but the sixth verse declares of the poor that he not only knows there is a God, but finds Him to be a refuge.

Whereupon evangelical persons conclude that the fool and the poor mean the same people; and make all the haste they can to be rich.[2]

9. Putting them, and their interpretations, out of our way, the Psalm becomes entirely explicit. There have been in all ages children of God and of man: the one born of the Spirit, and obeying it; the other born of the flesh, and obeying it.[3] I don't know how that entirely unintelligible sentence, "There were they in great fear," got into our English Psalm; in both the Greek and Latin versions it is, "God hath broken the bones of those that please men."[4]

[1] [For another reference to this point, see Letter 39, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 53).]

[2] [See Proverbs xxviii. 20.]

[3] [See John iii. 6.]

[4] [Ruskin's statement is at fault, perhaps owing to his confusing the fourteenth Psalm, with which he is dealing, and the fifty-third, to which he has not referred. In the fourteenth the words are simply "There were they in great fear, for God is in the generation of the righteous." In the fifty-third (verse 5), "There were they

And it is here said of the entire body of the children of men, at a particular time, that they had at that time all gone astray beyond hope; that none were left who so much as sought God, much less who were likely to find Him; and that these wretches and vagabonds were eating up God's own people as they ate bread.

Which has indeed been generally so in all ages; but beyond all recorded history is so in ours. Just and godly people can't live; and every clever rogue, and industrious fool, is making his fortune out of them, and producing abominable works of all sorts besides,—material gasometers, furnaces, chemical works, and the like;—with spiritual lies and lasciviousness[1] unheard of till now in Christendom. Which plain and disagreeable meaning of this portion of Scripture you will find pious people universally reject with abhorrence,—the direct word and open face of their Master being, in the present day, always by them, far more than His other enemies, "spitefully entreated, and spitted on."[2]

10. Next for the fifteenth Psalm.

It begins by asking God who shall abide in His tabernacle, or movable tavern; and who shall dwell *in His* holy hill. Note the difference of those two abidings. A tavern, or taberna, is originally a hut made by a traveller, of sticks cut on the spot; then, if he so arrange it as to be portable, it is a tabernacle;[3] so that, generally, a portable hut or house, supported by rods or sticks when it is set up, is a tabernacle;—on a large scale, having boards as well as curtains, and capable of much stateliness, but nearly synonymous with a tent, in Latin.

Therefore, the first question is, Who among travelling

in great fear, where no fear was, for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee." All three versions—Vulgate, LXX., and the English Bible—agree in the case of both Psalms, except that in the fifty-third, for "*of him* that encampeth against thee," the Vulgate has "eorum qui hominibus placent," and the LXX. "*ἀνθρωπαρέσκων*."]

[1] [Ruskin writes in his copy, "Explain; spiritualism, music, painting, *etc.*"]

[2] [Luke xviii. 32.]

[3] [On this word, compare Vol. XXII. p. 392 *n.*]

men will have God to set up his tavern for him when he wants rest?

And the second question is, Who, of travelling men, shall finally dwell, desiring to wander no more, in God's own house, established above the hills, where all nations flow to it?

11. You, perhaps, don't believe that either of these abodes may, or do, exist in reality: nor that God would ever cut down branches for you; or, better still, bid them spring up for a bower; or that He would like to see you in His own house, if you would go there. You prefer the buildings lately put up in rows for you "one brick thick in the walls," * in convenient neighbourhood to your pleasant business? Be it so;—then the fifteenth Psalm has nothing to say to you. For those who care to lodge with God, these following are the conditions of character.

They are to walk or deal uprightly with men. They are to work or do justice; or, in sum, do the best they can with their hands. They are to speak the truth to their own hearts, and see they do not persuade themselves they are honest when they ought to know themselves to be knaves; nor persuade themselves they are charitable and kind, when they ought to know themselves to be thieves and murderers. They are not to bite people with their tongues behind their backs, if they dare not rebuke them face to face. They are not to take up, or catch at, subjects of blame; but they are utterly and absolutely to despise vile persons who fear no God, and think the world was begot by mud, and is fed by money; and they are not to defend a guilty man's cause against an innocent one. Above all, this last verse is written for lawyers, or professed interpreters of justice, who are of all men most villainous, if, knowingly, they take reward against an innocent or rightfully contending person. And on these conditions the promise of God's presence and strength is finally given.

* See § 14 in the Notes [p. 677].

He that doeth thus shall not be moved, or shaken: for him, tabernacle and rock are alike safe: no wind shall overthrow them, nor earthquake rend.

12. That is the meaning of the fourteenth and fifteenth Psalms; and if you so believe them, and obey them, you will find your account in it. And they are the Word of God to you, so far as you have hearts capable of understanding them, or any other such message brought by His servants. But if your heart is dishonest and rebellious, you may read them for ever with lip-service, and all the while be "men-pleasers,"[1] whose bones are to be broken at the pit's mouth, and so left incapable of breath, brought by any winds of Heaven. And that is all I have to say to you this year.

[1] [Compare Ephesians vi. 6; Colossians iii. 22. Compare § 9, above.]

# NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

**13.** As I send these last sheets to press, I get from the Cheap-Fuel Supply Association, Limited, a letter advising me that the Right Hon. Lord Claud Hamilton, M.P., and the late Director of Stores at the War Office, and Michael Angelo, Esq., of St. James's Square, and the late Controller of Military Finance in Calcutta, with other estimable persons, are about to undertake the manufacture of peat into cheap fuel, for the public benefit; and promise a net profit on the operation, of six shillings and sixpence a ton; of which I am invited to secure my share. The manufacture of peat into portable fuel may, or may not, be desirable; that depends on what the British public means to do after they have burnt away all their bituminous and boggy ground in driving about at forty miles an hour, and making iron railings, and other such valuable property, for the possession of their posterity. But granting the manufacture desirable, and omitting all reference to its effect on the picturesque, why Lord Claud Hamilton and Michael Angelo, Esq., should offer *me*, a quiet Oxford student, any share of their six-and-sixpences, I can't think. I could not cut a peat if they would give me six-and-sixpence the dozen—I know nothing about its manufacture. What on earth do they propose to pay me for?[1]

**14.** The following letter from an old friend, whose manner of life, like my own, has been broken up (when it was too late to mend it again) by modern improvements, will be useful to me for reference in what I have to say in my January letter:[2]—

"About myself—ere long I shall be driven out of my house, the happiest refuge I ever nested in. It is again, like most old rooms, very lofty, is of wood and plaster, evidently of the Seventh Harry's time, and most interesting in many ways. It belonged to the Radcliffe family,—some branch, as I understand, from the scanty information I can scrape, of the Derwentwater family. Lord —— owns it now, or did till lately; for I am informed he has sold it and the lands about it to an oil-cloth company, who will start building their factory behind it shortly, and probably resell the land they do not use, with the hall, to be demolished as an incumbrance that does not pay. Already the 'Egyptian plague of bricks'[3] has alighted on its eastern side, devouring every green blade. Where the sheep fed last year, five streets of cheap cottages—one brick thick in the walls—(for the factory operatives belonging to two great cotton mills near) are in course of formation—great cartloads of stinking oyster-shells having been laid for their foundations; and the whole vicinity on the eastern side, in a state of mire and *débris* of broken bricks and slates, is so painful to my eyes that I scarce ever go out in daylight.

"Fifteen years ago a noble avenue of sycamores led to the hall, and a large wood covered the surface of an extensive plateau of red sandstone, and a moat surrounded the walls of the hall. Not a tree stands now, the moat is filled up, and the very rock itself is riddled into sand, and is being now carted away."

[1] ["*Cf.* Letter 28, § 10" (p. 513).—*MS. note by Author.*]
[2] [See Letter 37, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 21).]
[3] [See Letter 29, § 3 (above, p. 528).]

# ADVICE

15. I have now published my *Fors Clavigera* during three years, at a price which (some of my first estimates having been accidentally too low) neither pays me for my work, nor my assistant for his trouble. To my present subscribers, nevertheless, it will be continued at its first price. To new subscribers or casual purchasers, the price of each number, after the 31st December, 1873, will be tenpence, carriage paid as hitherto; and there will be no frontispieces.

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## 16. TOTAL SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ST. GEORGE'S FUND

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[1] [In a marked copy of this letter (in Mr. Allen's possession) Ruskin adds: "16. Alfred Hunt. Gift. 1873. £25. 17. Gift in Allen's hands still £1. 18. Ellis" (no amount specified). Against "7" he writes "Pakenham Stillwell."]

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